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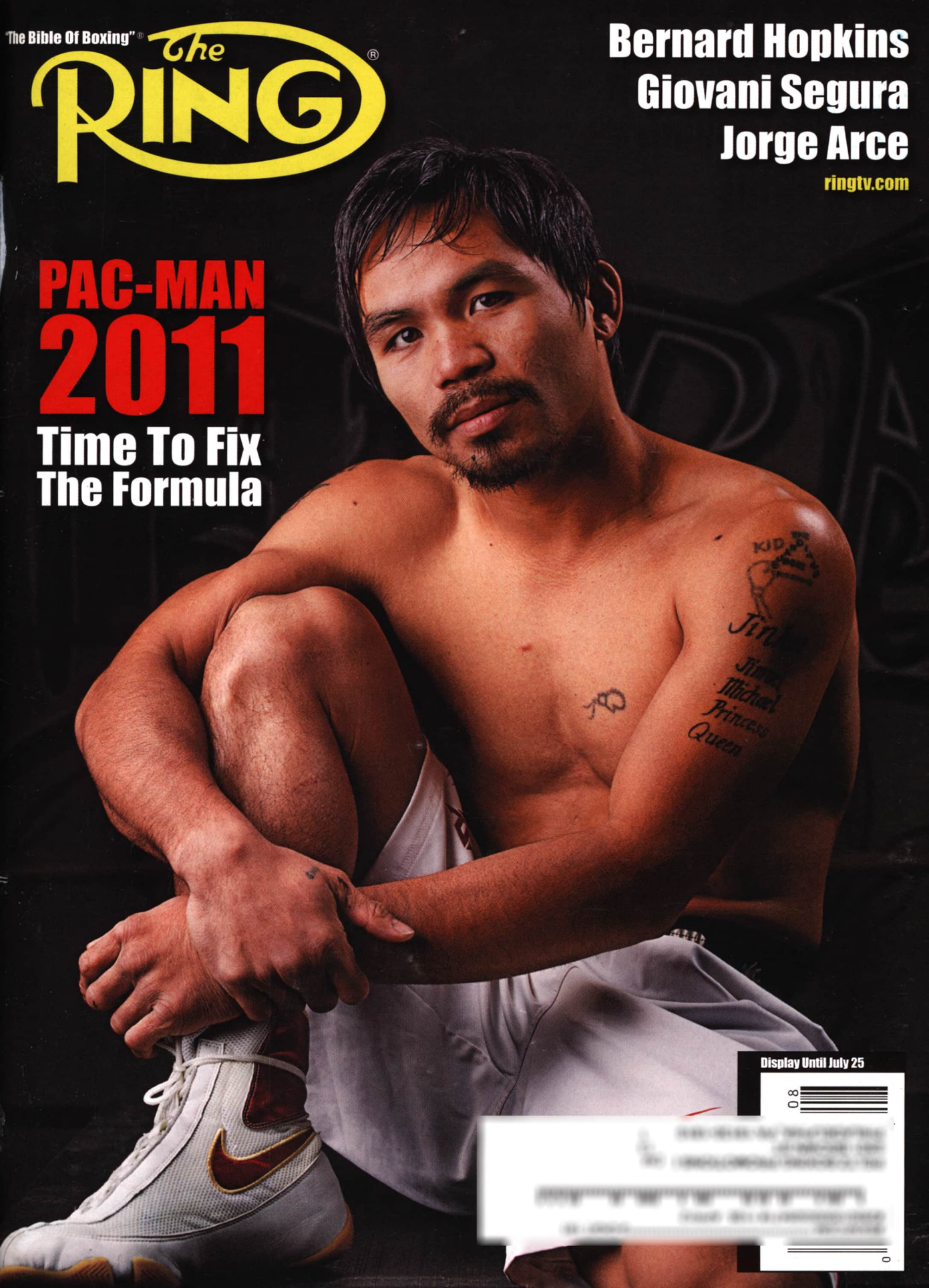
PAC-MAN 2011

Time To Fix The Formula



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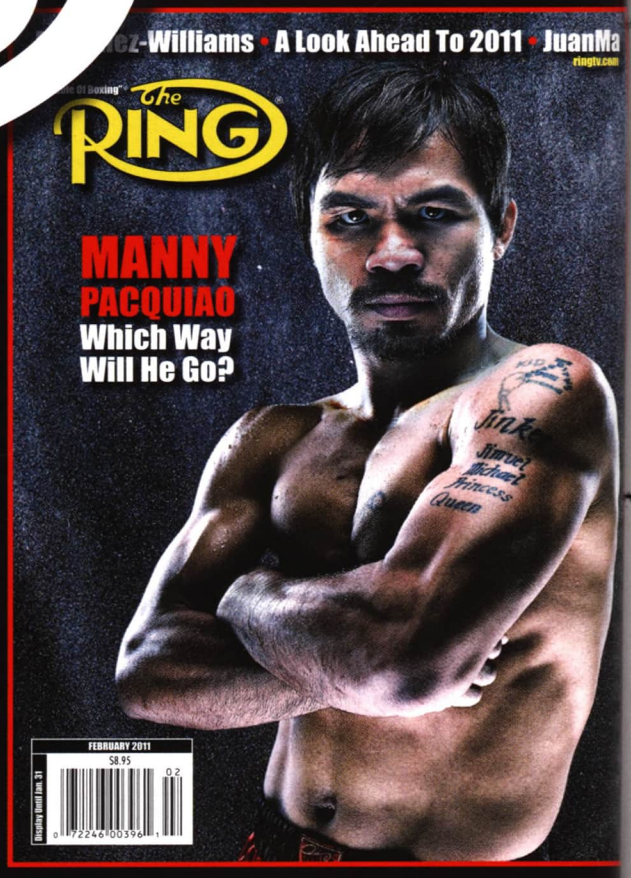

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At The Midpoint

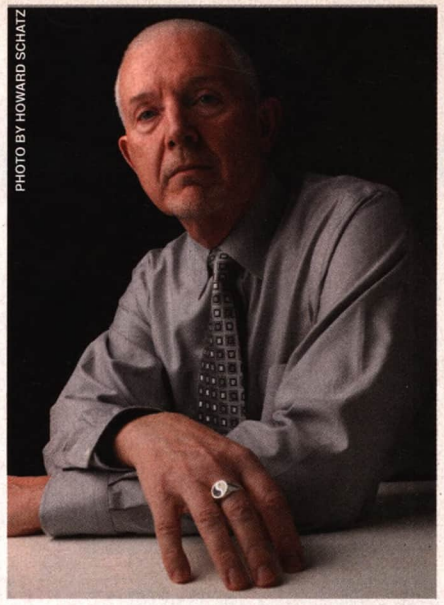
PHOTO BY HOWARD SCHATZ

By the time this issue of THE RING arrives at retail outlets, 2011 will be halfway over. And although the first six months have brought us a fair share of outstanding fights and an abundance of stimulating upsets, the game itself frequently appears static, seemingly doomed to a series of fits and starts that seldom go anywhere.

But is that really the case? Is boxing stuck in a rut, or does it just seem that way when viewed from a shortsighted, the sky-is-falling point of view?

Undoubtedly, the brightest light of the first decade of the 21st century has been Manny Pacquiao. It's hard to imagine where the sport would be today without his star power. Perhaps unwisely, we have come to rely on Pacquiao to elevate the sport to dizzying heights several times a year.

But even this Filipino Atlas cannot support the boxing world on his shoulders indefinitely, and, of late, Pacquiao has been disparaged for taking on Joshua Clottey, Antonio Margarito, and Shane Mosley in his three most-recent fights.

When Muhammad Ali wanted an easy payday, he fought guys such as Joe Bugner, Chuck Wepner, and Richard Dunn. When Ali wanted a *really* easy fight, the likes of Jurgen Blin, Rudy Lubbers, and Jean-Pierre Coopman happily sacrificed themselves on his behalf.

Is there a double standard at work? No, not really. Railing against the cash cow is nothing new, rather a reoccurring theme throughout boxing history.

Almost forgotten beneath the romantic haze of history is the fact that there was a fair amount of unhappy squawking when Ali embarked on various globetrotting bum-of-the-month tours. Ironically, the mismatches didn't hurt Ali's popularity or marketability one iota. That's because he'd transcended boxing and reached a place where who he was had become more important than what he did inside the ring.

If Pacquiao is channeling Ali, let's hope the guiding vibe remembers that Ali spiced up his schedule with meaningful matches against the best of his era. Whether or not Pacquiao's pending bout with Juan Manuel Marquez measures up to such a high standard is debatable.

We won't know the answer to that until after the fight, but, despite the competitiveness of their previous two encounters, it is doubtful Marquez will be to Pacquiao what Joe Frazier was to Ali. Still, with Floyd Mayweather bogged down in a morass of personal and legal problems, the reigning lightweight champion just might be the best available alternative. Such are the dangers of relying too much on a single fighter.

Thankfully, boxing got an unexpected boost when 46-year-old Bernard Hopkins became the oldest boxer ever to win a world championship when he outfoxed and outfought 28-year-old Jean Pascal. Not only was the match of tremendous historical significance, it apparently caught the attention of the paying public: The capacity crowd of 17,560 at the Bell Centre set a new indoor attendance record for Montreal and was watched by approximately 1.8 million viewers, reportedly HBO's largest audience in two years.

Before either Pacquiao or Hopkins fight again, the long-awaited heavyweight championship match between Wladimir Klitschko and David Haye will take place. Regardless of who prevails, if it's a good fight, another positive piece in the puzzle will fall into place as we head, with guarded optimism, into the second half of the year.

But if you're not buying the sanguine forecast, try thinking of boxing as an unending soap opera. Come what may, it's much easier to digest that way, and, before the year is over, your hunger for compelling fights could very well be satisfied.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

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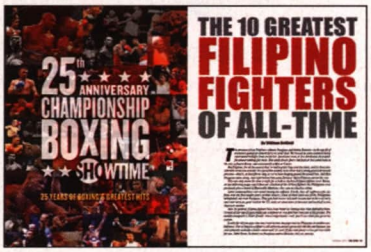
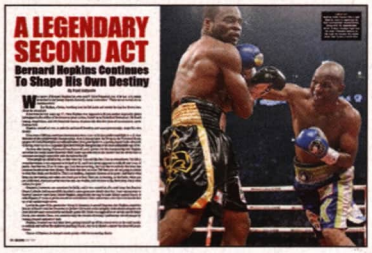
The RING AUGUST 2011

FEATURES

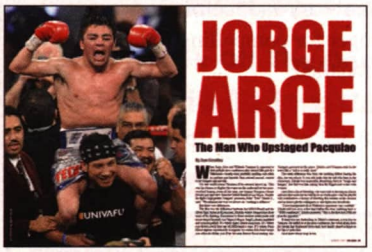
34 PAC-MAN 2011
Time To Fix The Formula
"Despite winning a unanimous decision by an overwhelming margin, headlines such as 'Brilliant Pacquiao's Prime Is Being Squandered,' 'Hum-drum Pac-man,' and 'Up Next For Pacquiao: Do We Care?' greeted the pound-for-pound king at the breakfast table."
By Nigel Collins



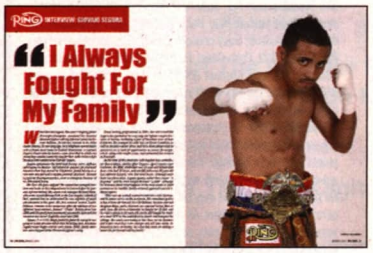
43 THE 10 GREATEST FILIPINO FIGHTERS OF ALL-TIME
"But Filipinos, for all the success they've had in prize rings over the years, and it's been considerable when you consider the size of the country, have never had a strong pound-for-pound presence—that is, at least for as long as we've been keeping pound-for-pound lists. And then Pacquiao came along."
By William Dettloff



56 A LEGENDARY SECOND ACT
Bernard Hopkins Continues To Shape His Own Destiny
"Contrary to [George] Foreman's contention that Hopkins would have to score a knock out to take the title, this time Pascal would confront an even more formidable challenge in going up against both history and a legend."
By Paul Salgado

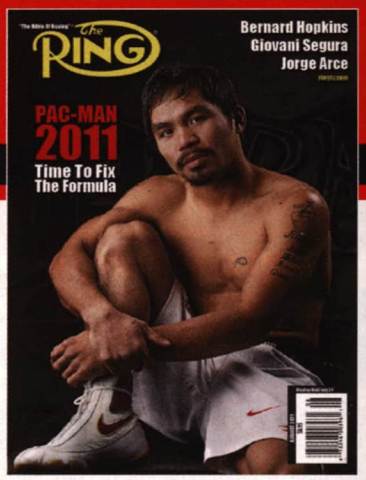


64 JORGE ARCE
The Man Who Upstaged Pacquiao
"Arce does a lot of clowning—he once rode to the ring on a horse and says that some day he will fly in on a helicopter—but his playful side overshadows a history of brawling that borders on the obscene and an almost gleeful willingness to turn fights into bloodbaths."
By Don Stradley



70 THE RING INTERVIEW: GIOVANI SEGURA
"I Always Fought For My Family"
"Segura epitomizes the hard-luck boxing story: difficult upbringing in Mexico; left behind by parents for financial reasons when they moved to California; found boxing as a late-teen and pursued it despite parental objection; doomed to fight for five-figure paydays."
By David Mayo

80 CUTMAN
The Boxing Musical Makes A Comeback
"The show, which producers hope will hit Broadway in 2012, is the brainchild of three young men: writer/director Jared Coseglia, composer Drew Brody, and actor/writer Cory Grant. The roots of the project go back to an unlikely source."
By Don Stradley



Cover Photo of Manny Pacquiao photographed by **Howard Schatz** for his upcoming book *AT THE FIGHTS: Inside the World of Professional Boxing*

Cover Design by **David Romanosky**

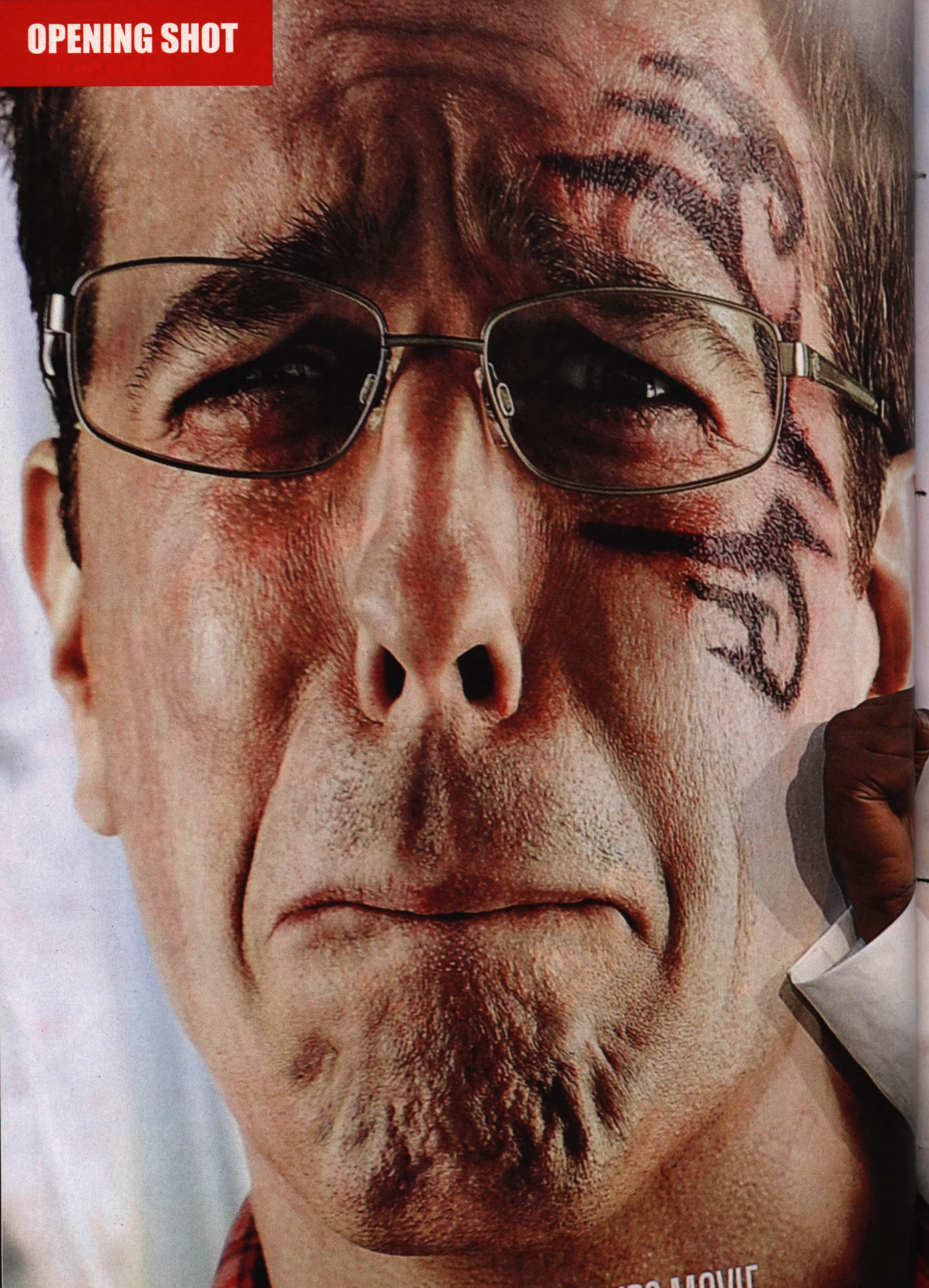
DEPARTMENTS

3 **RINGSIDE**
by Nigel Collins
6 **OPENING SHOT**
8 **COME OUT WRITING**
10 **ROUND ONE**
16 **THE RING STAT PACK**
- Fighter Of The Month
- Pound-For-Pound
- Ratings Analysis
- The Ring Ratings

20 **RYAN OUT LOUD**
by Jeff Ryan
24 **DIGGING DEEP**
by Ivan Goldman
28 **CAMERA CLICKS**
30 **AT THE FIGHTS**
31 **RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH**
86 **WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS**
88 **RINGSIDE REPORTS**
99 **FLASHBACK: OCTOBER 2001**
102 **AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS**
by Michael Rivest
104 **THE SWEETER SCIENCE**
by Chris Richards
106 **NEW FACES: TEON KENNEDY**
by Don Stewart
108 **FIGHT DOCTOR**
by Margaret Goodman, MD
110 **HITTING ON THE BREAK**
by Jim Bagg
114 **LOOKING AHEAD**
by Lee Groves

WHAT CHANGES DOES PACQUIAO NEED TO MAKE?
Find out on Page 34

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES



TAT TROUBLE

Mike Tyson takes a playful poke at actor Ed Helms' image on a *Hangover Part II* movie poster. Tyson had a role in the first *Hangover* film, and his facial tattoo was parodied by Helms in the sequel. The problem is that Warner Bros. did not get permission to reproduce the copyrighted tattoo from artist S. Victor Whitmill, who unsuccessfully sought to stop the movie's release.

PHOTO MARK RALSTON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

COME OUT WRITING

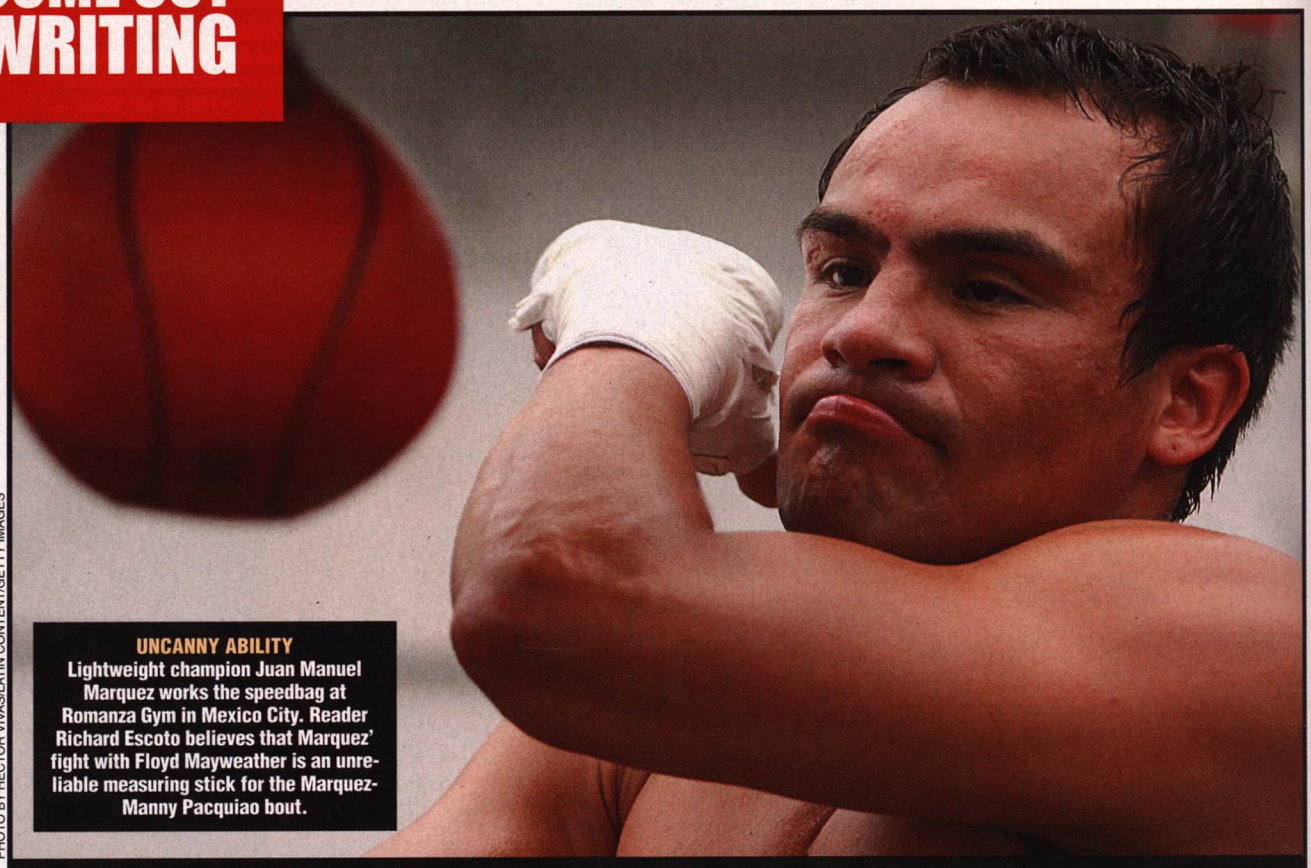


PHOTO BY HECTOR VIVAS/LATIN CONTENT/GETTY IMAGES

UNCANNY ABILITY
Lightweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez works the speedbag at Romanza Gym in Mexico City. Reader Richard Escoto believes that Marquez' fight with Floyd Mayweather is an unreliable measuring stick for the Marquez-Manny Pacquiao bout.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Don't Underestimate Marquez

There's a flaw with using Juan Manuel Marquez' performance against Floyd Mayweather as a yardstick for a welterweight bout with Manny Pacquiao. Mayweather downright cheated by weighing in two pounds over the 144-pound catchweight. The fact he refused to be weighed again on fight night makes it fair to assume he stepped into the ring as a middleweight in order to beat the lightweight champion. Mayweather was well-fed, hydrated, and possessed a five-inch reach advantage. Marquez may as well have picked a fight with Paul Williams or a Klitschko.

In a fight with Pacquiao, reach and speed never seemed to be an issue since Marquez possesses the uncanny ability to put his fist where Pacquiao's face will be after every punch. Furthermore, Marquez' ass is brought to you by the folks who make Super Balls, so you can count on him bouncing right back as soon as it hits the canvas.

RICHARD ESCOTO
rlescoto@gmail.com

Pacquiao-Martinez

If I was Manny Pacquaio's advisor, I'd say take the Sergio Martinez fight and then retire. Pac-Man would be an underdog but would get huge props for taking this fight and probably make $30- $40-million. Manny would not lose one drop of status if he didn't prevail. But if he wins, maybe he'll be regarded as one of the top three fighters of all-time! So take the fight, Manny. I bet that your feet will keep you from getting seriously hurt, and you will be the fastest and fittest fighter Martinez has ever faced. Although Pacquiao would be the underdog against the undisputed middleweight champ, if he goes down swinging, his legend only grows. It's a no-lose situation for Manny, and maybe he could pull off an upset.

VINCENT HOWARD
Tucson, AZ

Sugar Shane's Sunset

I believe the worst thing that happened to Shane Mosley in his bout with Manny Pacquiao was that he went the distance with the pound-for-pound king. Had Sugar Shane been stopped, I believe we would have seen him hang up his gloves and walk away, his health and reputation, for the most part, intact. Instead, he did in fact go the 12 rounds, and I was left scratching my head listening to some of his postfight comments. Unfortunately, I don't think we have seen the last of him and his never-ending self-belief. Shane was one of the greats of his era, but, like all great fighters, Father Time has caught up to him. It is my hope that Shane will walk off into the sunset and into the Hall of Fame. God bless you, Shane, and thank you for all your great fights.

PAUL MACKEY
St. John's, Newfoundland

More One-Punch Kayos

I agree with Eric Raskin's picks in "One And Done! The 20 Greatest One-Punch Knockouts of All Time" in the June 2011 issue of THE RING. I would, however, add Joe Louis' four-round chilling of Paolino Uzcudun on December 13, 1935. Former Madison Square Garden matchmaker Harry Markson said: "When they talk of a devastating blow, this was the hardest punch I've ever seen thrown." They didn't call Louis "The Brown Bomber" for nothing.

CHARLES SAUNDERS
Dartmouth, NS

I pretty much agree with THE RING's list of the 20 greatest one-punch knockout of all-time, but Wilfred Benitez-Maurice Hope and Rocky Lockridge-Roger Mayweather should be added.

ARTURO SANTIAGO RUBERO
Bronx, NY

Uncrowned Champion

I have already named Nonito Donaire the bantamweight champion of the world. I have seen five of THE RING's top 10 contenders and none of them can beat Donaire. I have been attending and watching boxing matches since 1946, and I know when I see a special talent. Donaire is a special talent with all the skills needed to be successful. Only two questions remain: Can he take his punching power into the late rounds, and how good is his chin?

C.G. ELLISON
Brockton, MA

Time For John To Shine

Isn't it about time long-serving featherweight titlist Chris John received his due respect? The Indonesian star has yet to lose in 47 professional fights. John's career has followed a somewhat similar path to that of Joe Calzaghe: Too many title defenses at home and a dearth of top-flight opponents on his ledger have conspired to obscure the tremendous consistency and occasional brilliance of a vastly underrated titleholder. John needs to step up to the plate and fight Yuriorkis Gamboa in a unification match. The Cuban dynamo has already professed an interest in the fight, and now is the time to find out just how good (or great) John really is.

BARRY RABBITTS
San Francisco, CA

Not Undefeated

Always enjoy "Ryan Out Loud" column and Jeff's insightful commentary on past and present ring happenings. However, in Ryan's Ali-Frazier Anniversary piece, he incorrectly mentions the first Sugar Ray Leonard-Tommy Hearns bout as another great match up of unbeaten fighters. While it certainly was a tremendous pairing, boxing fans will remember that Leonard came into the fight having lost to Roberto Duran in June of the previous year.

BOB RYDER
Warren, MI ■

UNSUNG TITLEHOLDER
Reader Barry Rabbits thinks Chris John has not gained the respect he deserves and urges a showdown with Yuriorkis Gamboa to prove John's greatness. Sounds good to us, especially as it would also fill THE RING championship vacancy at 126 pounds.

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN/GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

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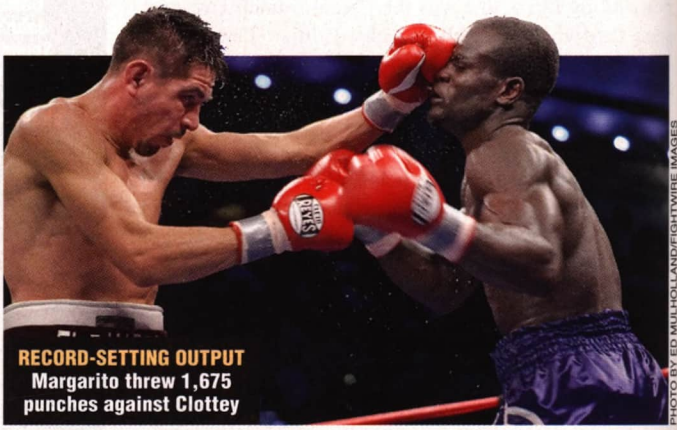
Memories Of A Punch Counter

Ever since Lee Groves started working for CompuBox in March 2007, he's counted punches at hundreds of fights from ringside and even more from video while compiling prefight analyses (and writing Tales From the Vault*). The following list, detailed chronologically, relives 10 of Grove's most vivid punch-counting memories.*

Antonio Margarito W 12 Joshua Clottey, December 2, 2006, Atlantic City, NJ: Margarito established a new record for punches thrown in a 12-round fight (1,675), breaking Zack Padilla's 1,596 against Ray Oliveira in 1993. Also, Clottey averaged 38.1 punches per round to Margarito's 139.6—the largest activity gap I've ever seen—yet some say he did enough to win. Go figure.



RECORD-SETTING OUTPUT Margarito threw 1,675 punches against Clottey

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Andrey Tsurkan KO 9 Sammy Sparkman, April 11, 2007, New York, NY: At his best, the Ukrainian 154-pounder was a whirlwind, and the Sparkman fight was his zenith. As Tsurkan strung several 120-plus-punch rounds, topping off at 146 in the second, I joked that I'd need Epsom salts for my hands after the fight. Sparkman was the one needing treatment after a vicious hook laid him out.

Isaac Hlatschwayo W 12 Nate Campbell, April 7, 2006, Tampa, FL: Campbell's wicked body attack forged a solid lead in the first six rounds. As his accuracy soared to 65 percent, I relished hitting that "body connect" button again and again. But Campbell throttled down just enough to allow Hlatschwayo to rally, and, despite Campbell's 60 percent body connect-rate, the South African won a split decision.

Chris Byrd KO 7 Paul Marinaccio, April 18, 2007, Nassau, Bahamas: Byrd's win was overshadowed by the festive atmosphere enveloping the venerable Fort Campbell soccer/cricket stadium. The national children's choir sung the anthem and "We Are The World" while an excellent band complete with trombones and tubas played from the bleachers the entire evening.

Herman Ngoudjo W 12 Randall Bailey, June 8, 2007, Montreal, Canada: A dramatic fight that saw the fighters trade knockdowns in the first two rounds was overtaken by Mother Nature's wrath. Howling winds, torrential rain, and a brief power outage followed a 15-degree temperature drop. With a soaked but energized crowd cheering him on, the Montreal-based Cameroon native rallied to capture a split decision.

Lucian Bute W 12 Sakio Bika, June 15, 2007, Montreal Canada: The loudest ring-entrance ovation I've ever heard, period. The Bell Centre crowd even drowned out the live band that heralded Bute's arrival, and they had no sound system. Forget about Cotto at MSG or Joe Mesi in Buffalo, this tops them all.

Darnell Wilson KO 11 Emmanuel Nwodo, June 29, 2007, New York, NY: Wilson was in the throes of a punching drought—four connects per round in the previous four—when the "Ding-a-Ling Man" rung Nwodo's bell with the single hardest punch I've seen live. The crushing hook left Nwodo in a heap and down for five excruciating minutes.

Jason LeHoullier D 10 Jose Gonzalez, March 7, 2008, Mashantucket, CT: Statistically speaking, this was no contest (358 to 219 total connects, 1,045 to 578 total punches), and Gonzalez' attack left LeHoullier's eyes discolored. The judges who spared the local lad his first defeat did him no favors, for he lost each of the next five fights, two by knockout.

TIMBER! Wilson ices Nwodo with a hellacious left hook

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Ali Funeka D 12 Joan Guzman I, November 28, 2009, Quebec City, Canada: Another atrocious decision where the numbers (248 to 163 total connects, 903 to 493 total punches, 142 to 32 jab connects) trumped the judges, who all scored 114-114. The ringside shock and disillusionment was palpable for Funeka bloodied Guzman's face and had him all but out several times in the later rounds.

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. W 12 John Duddy, June 26, 2010, San Antonio, TX: Chavez Jr.'s numbers against the painfully porous Irishman were off the charts. He landed 67 percent overall (506 of 757), 63 percent of his jabs (144 of 228), and 68 percent of his power shots (362 of 529). Julio's son never looked better while Duddy reinforced his reputation for toughness, determination, and stubbornness.

—Lee Groves

Sir Henry Cooper, 1934-2011

SIR HENRY IN HIS PRIME
British fans will never forget "Our 'Enry"

The man known fondly to his fans as "Our 'Enry" was certainly one of the most endearing celebrities in British sport. Well before his retirement, he had transcended boxing to become a figure of national adoration. But he wasn't quite as good as legend suggests (although one wouldn't say that too loudly in London's East End).

Cooper was an aggressive left-handed orthodox boxer with sound defensive skills. He owned an educated jab and a thumping hook ("'Enry's 'Ammer"), and he was always impeccably conditioned. But aside from paper-thin brows that regularly spurted claret and his lack of bulk (185 to 190 pounds), he had a weak right, and his chin wasn't the hardest at the elite level.

Cooper's 40-14-1 (27) record, included several reigns as British, Commonwealth, and European champion, and some good Americans—most notably, Zora Folley (a close decision in 1958, although Folley stopped him in two in '61). But Cooper usually lost at the elite level, and several of those who bettered him were his size, including Ingemar Johansson in 1957 (KO by 5) and Floyd Patterson in 1966 (KO by 4).

At home, his fame was enhanced by two supposedly controversial defeats, against Muhammad Ali in 1963 and Joe Bugner in 1971.

Local legend has it that Cooper, who dropped the 21-year-old Ali with a perfect left hook late in the fourth, would have gone on to win if Angelo Dundee hadn't split Ali's gloves, prompting a long search for a replacement pair (Cooper always said the break was three to five minutes long). In fact, Ali was up at the count of three, there was no glove replacement, and the inter-round rest lasted 66 seconds. Ali made no mistake in the fifth, and the blood poured. In the return, three years on, a 201-pound Ali kept his distance and carved Cooper up in six to retain the world title.

The narrow points loss to Bugner prompted Cooper's retirement at the age of 37. Normally the epitome of a gentleman outside the ring, he refused to speak to referee Harry Gibbs for many years because of Gibbs' decision in favor of Bugner. But many neutrals at ringside felt Gibbs got it right, and that is certainly the way it looks on film.

Unlike so many boxers, Cooper thrived in retirement, making and losing a fortune in investments, appearing regularly on television as a media celebrity and occasionally on film, and making money through advertising endorsements (particularly Brut aftershave) and as an after-dinner speaker. In 2000, he was knighted, becoming Sir Henry Cooper. He was not a political figure, but, in the 1970s, he made a strong stand against racism by becoming the first celebrity sponsor of the left wing Anti-Nazi League.

Sir Henry remained healthy, alert and sharp-witted in his later years, but, after the death of his wife, Albina, in 2008 and his twin brother, George, last year, his health deteriorated, and he died two days before his 77th birthday, leaving two adult sons.

—Gavin Evans

Lionel Rose, 1948-2011

Australian boxing lost one of its true boxing greats when former bantamweight world champion Lionel Rose passed away on May 8 in Melbourne. Arguably, along with Jeff Fenech, the country's best ever locally produced boxer, Rose was 62 years of age and had struggled with his health since suffering a stroke in January 2010.

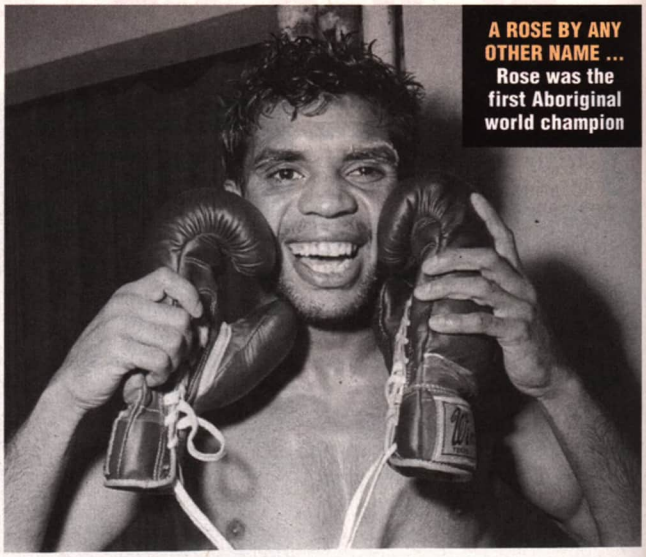
Rose was only 19 years old when he went to Japan to face world champion Masahiko "Fighting" Harada for the bantamweight world title on February 27, 1968, and won via majority points decision, making him the first Aboriginal world champion in any sport. Upon his return to Australia with his newly won world title, a crowd of more than 100,000 fans witnessed a public reception at Melbourne Town Hall.

Born in Drouin, Victoria, on June 21, 1948, the physically gifted Rose demonstrated a superb left hand. He would often jab and then follow with triple left hooks with incredible hand speed. His boxing ability, balance, and skills were just superior to anyone else on his best nights.

In December 1968, in his second defense, Rose defended against Mexican Chucho Castillo at the Forum in Inglewood, California, in front of 14,000 local fans. The 15-round split decision win for Rose, after he was knocked down in round 10, resulted in a crowd riot. Debris was thrown into the ring, and cars were overturned in the parking lot.

After four defenses, Mexico's Ruben Olivares, who had a record of 51-0-1 wins, knocked out Rose to take the world title on August 22, 1969, at the Inglewood Forum.

Rose would fight on over seven more years with varying success, but he never again held a world title. Retiring with a record of 42-11 (12), Rose was inducted into the Australian National Boxing Hall of Fame in 2003.

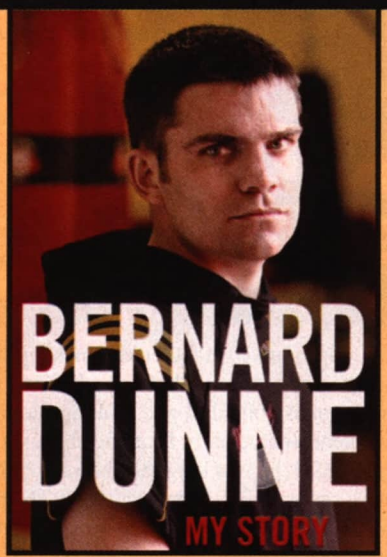


A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME ... Rose was the first Aboriginal world champion

A state funeral was held for Rose on May 16 at Festival Hall in Melbourne, the venue where he had fought on 23 occasions as a professional. He was buried near his home in Warragul, Victoria. It is a fitting resting place for the inspiration fighter. In June 2010, a 12-foot tall tribute statue of Rose, at a cost of $180,000, was unveiled in Queens Park at the center of the small country locale.

—Paul Upman

BOXING BOOKSHELF



BERNARD DUNNE: MY STORY
By Bernard Dunne
Penguin Ireland, paperback
264 pages, $28.00

Though he too is suffering the effects of their torrid battle, Bernard Dunne makes his way to the hospital to check out his beaten opponent. He wants to thank Ricardo Cordoba for a great fight and for giving him the opportunity to win the WBA junior featherweight title, but neither speaks the other's language, so they just hold hands. "The bond between two fighters is unbreakable," Dunne affirms.

The revelation that he felt no such warmth towards his mentor, Brian Peters, as revealed in *Bernard Dunne: My Story* has surprised many. The conflict was over money. Dunne believes that having a promoter who was also his manager represented a conflict of interest.

"I could never trust someone acting in this dual capacity," he writes. It seems unfair, however, not to fully acknowledge that, without Peters' bold input, Irish boxing—and his own career—might never have taken off like it did in the last decade.

In his refreshingly frank autobiography, Dunne recalls the trauma of the brain cyst discovery that almost derailed his career before it got going and how his unswerving self-belief, backed by loyal trainer Harry Hawkins, enabled him to overcome a shocking 86-second knockout by Kiko Martinez and recommence his climb up the world rankings. Peters was able to lure Cordoba to Dublin to defend his WBA title (at least that part left aside by "super" champion Celestino Caballero) in March 2009. In a pulsating contest, Dunne twice climbed off the canvas to halt the Panamanian in the 11th round. He lost the title in his first defense, to mandatory challenger Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym, inside three rounds and, after a few months deliberation, announced his retirement. To his credit, Dunne offered no excuses for his two defeats in 30 fights. Other losers please note.

—Patrick Myler

You Be The Judge

Former Las Vegas boxing judge Chuck Giampa provides analysis of officials and scorecards of fights in which he is not directly involved.

Round 10 of the Manny Pacquiao-Shane Mosley fight was both interesting and perplexing for the fans, referee, and ringside judges.

Referee Kenny Bayless ruled that Mosley had knocked down Pacquiao and gave Pacquiao the mandatory 8-count. However, each official judge scored the round differently: Glenn Trowbridge 10-9 Mosley, Dave Moretti 10-10, and Duane Ford 10-9 Pacquiao.

Even though Bayless initially ruled Pacquiao was knocked down, after the fight, he stated that, upon review of the replay, it was *not* a knockdown. Pacquiao went down as a result of a push and not a punch.

Even so, when a referee rules a knockdown by giving the fallen fighter the mandatory 8-count, the judges have to score it as a knockdown. Although each judge factored the knockdown in their scoring of the round, how did each judge arrive at a different score?

Contrary to common belief, a knockdown is not always scored 10-8 in favor of the fighter causing the knock down.

There is a misconception that a fighter cannot lose a round if he knocks down his opponent. Thus, if Mosley was losing the round and scored a knockdown, this theory would result in Mosley winning the round 10-9 as Trowbridge's score indicated.

If Pacquiao was winning the round prior to and after the knockdown, then the round could be scored 10-10 as Moretti's score indicated.

However, if the judge had Pacquiao winning decisively prior to the knockdown and continuing to dominate after the knockdown, the judge could score the round 10-9 for Pacquiao as Ford's score indicated.

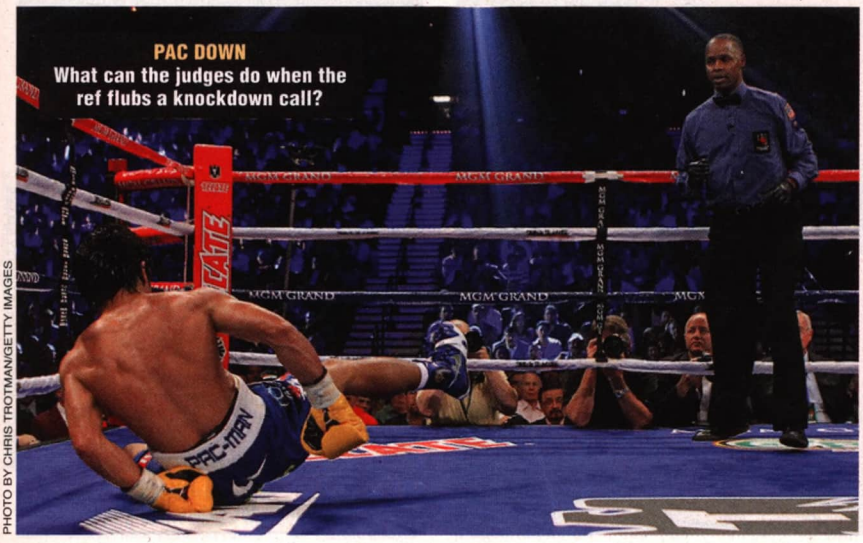
Both Moretti and Ford felt that Pacquiao clearly dominated the round. They also took into account the degree of the knockdown. Pacquiao was not hurt as a result of the knockdown, and they felt that Pacquiao dominated the rest of the round.

A judge should take into account the effects of a knocked down fighter: Is he hurt, are his legs weak, does he have trouble focusing, does he clinch to keep him from falling again due to weakness, etc. In this round, Pacquiao dominated Mosley prior to and even after the so-called knockdown.

Interestingly, Bayless told me that he spoke to Freddie Roach and Pacquiao, with the permission of the Nevada State Athletic Commission, to let them know that he had made a mistake ruling it was a knock down.

Bayless should be commended for his honesty. Quite a few officials have told me over the years that they would never admit a mistake. I disagree with that philosophy and agree with Bayless: If you make a mistake, admit it. That's what a true professional referee or judge would do.

—Chuck Giampa



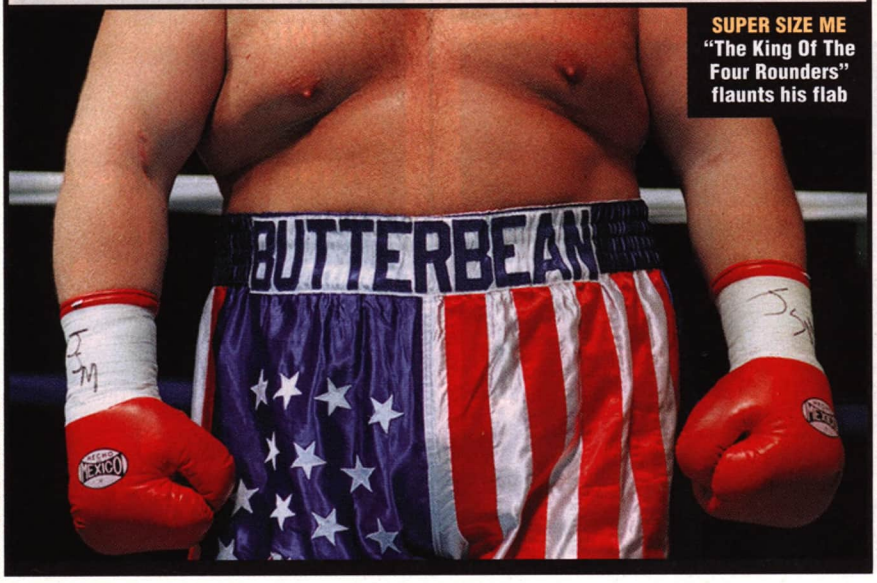
PAC DOWN
What can the judges do when the ref flubs a knockdown call?

PHOTO BY CHRIS TROTMAN/GETTY IMAGES

TOP 10 FAT HEAVYWEIGHTS OF ALL-TIME

The famously portly Chris Arreola weighed in at a relatively svelte 234 for his recent stoppage of fellow chubster Nagy Aguilera, leading us to wonder just who are the best fat heavyweights ever? Now we wonder no more:

1. **George Foreman (circa 1987-1997):** Cheeseburgers or not, Big George laughed all the way to the bank. He was out of breath when he got there, but he laughed all the way.
2. **Willie Meehan:** How good was "Fat Boy" Meehan? He went 2-1-2 against Jack Dempsey, and we're not talking about pie-eating contests.
3. **Don Cockell:** Watch the video of Cockell's fight against Rocky Marciano and count the number of times Cockell's back fat cries out in pain.
4. **Buster Mathis Sr.:** Big Buster fought Ali, Frazier, Quarry, Chuvalo, and anyone else who stood between him and a plate of brownies.
5. **Tony Galento:** Not all fatsos are jolly. "Two-Ton" Tony floored Joe Louis and laid out the great Jackie Gleason in a street fight.
6. **Tony Tubbs:** The quick-fisted Tubbs was one letter away from having the most apropos last name in the history of sports. It's a damn shame.
7. **James Toney:** Only James could get busted for steroids while looking like a bowling ball in short pants.
8. **Leroy Jones:** Never mind the loss to Larry Holmes, Jones could fight. He could eat too. It's always good to have something to fall back on.
9. **Lawrence Clay-Bey:** How fat was Clay-Bey? He needed two last names. Rimshot! Thanks folks, I'll be here all week. Try the eggplant parmigiana!
10. **Butterbean:** Pound-for-cheesy pound, there's never been a doughier, rounder heavyweight fighter than Butterball, er, Butterbean.



SUPER SIZE ME
"The King Of The Four Rounders" flaunts his flab

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

Outside

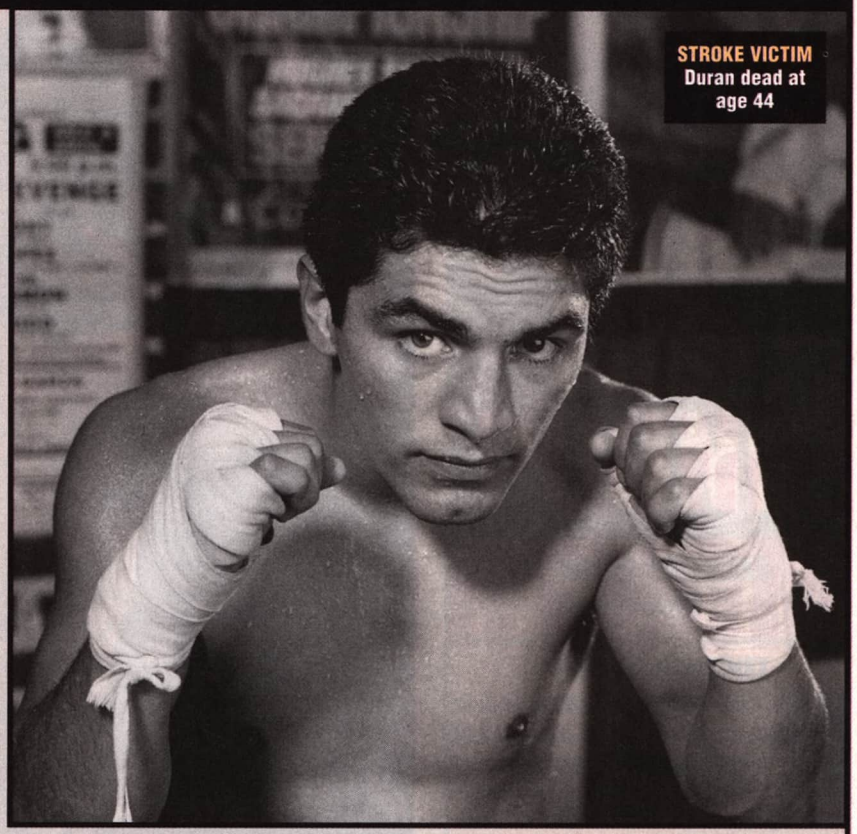
Former WBA flyweight titleholder **Takefumi Sakata**, who retired in September 2010 with an overall record of 36-6-2 (17), was elected councilor of Inagi City, which is located in the Kanton region of the Tokyo Metropolis, in April … In May, **Oscar De La Hoya**, president of Golden Boy Promotions, entered rehab, seeking help for substance abuse. When TMZ.com broke the story, De La Hoya issued a statement saying: "After doing an honest evaluation of myself, I recognize that there are certain issues that I need to work on. Like everybody, I have my flaws and do not want to be one of those people that is afraid to admit and address those flaws. Throughout my career and my life, I have always met all challenges head on, and this is no different. I am confident that with the support of my family and friends, I will become stronger, healthier person. I ask for respect and privacy as my family and I go through this process" … **Floyd Mayweather**'s trial on a misdemeanor battery charge has been postponed until September 1. Mayweather is accused of allegedly poking a homeowner's association security guard in the face … Another spat with homeowner's security guards has resulted in an additional criminal complaint alleging Mayweather committed two misdemeanor acts of harassment. According to the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, Mayweather allegedly engaged in an obscenity-laced confrontation with two security guards inside the

PHOTO BY ASTRID STAWIARZ/GETTY IMAGES

OSCAR DE LA HOYA
Seeks help for substance abuse

The Ropes

OBITUARIES



STROKE VICTIM
Duran dead at age 44

Former junior featherweight contender **Richard "Bam Bam" Duran**, 44, died April 26, a week after being stricken by a stroke. The Sacramento, California, boxer turned pro in October 1988 and tallied a 27-3 (13) record before retiring following his final fight, in July 1994. Duran had two shots at alphabet titles, losing 12-round decisions to IBF titlist **Kennedy McKinney** and WBC kingpin **Tracy Harris Patterson**. "Richard was a terrific fighter, but we agreed that he probably stayed in the amateurs too long before turning pro," said promoter **Don Chargin**. In 2000, Duran was sentenced to one year in prison for involuntary manslaughter after killing a man in a bar fight. According to writer **Jim Jenkins**, Duran had turned his life around in recent years and trained amateur boxers ... New York *Daily News* cartoonist and columnist **Bill Gallo**, 88, died on May 10 from complications of pneumonia at White Pains Hospital. Gallo worked at the *Daily News* for seven decades, starting as copy boy shortly after graduating from high school. Gallo covered all sports but had a soft spot for boxers. "He loved boxers and reviled the charlatans who bled them dry," said Gallo's friend, New York Police Department Chief **Raymond Kelly**. "Boxers were like Bill, all heart and skill with their hands" ... Chicago cruiserweight **Kevin Cestone**, 39, died in April of unknown causes. Cestone, 5-1 (3) as a pro, was a five-time Golden Gloves champion and had worked as a stock trader ... **Alice Ward**, the 79-year-old mother of **Micky Ward**, died in late April of cardiac arrest. Actress **Mellisa Leon** won an Academy Award for her portrayal of Alice in *The Fighter*, a biopic about Micky and his brother, **Dickie Eklund**.

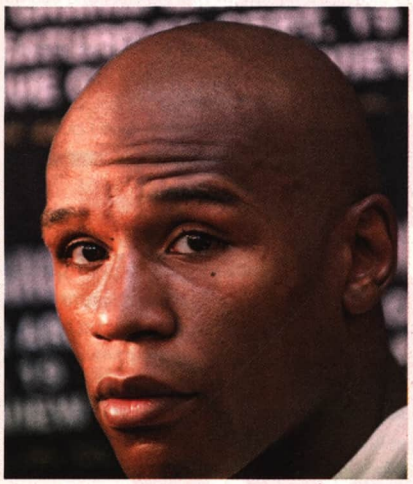


PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

MORE "MONEY" TROUBLE
Floyd's court dates are piling up

boxer's gated community over parking tickets. "My homies have guns. If you want me to call them, they'd come over here and take care of you," Mayweather is quoted as saying in a Las Vegas police report obtained by the *Review-Journal*. And as if all of the above wasn't enough, security guard **Clay Gerling** has filed a lawsuit against Mayweather and an unidentified bodyguard. According to the lawsuit, the bodyguard grabbed and choked Gerling when he tried to ask the boxer and others in his party for identification at the Drai nightclub in Bill's Gamblin' Hall and Saloon ... British lightweight **Kevin Mitchell**, 26, and his mother, **Alice O'Connor**, are suspected of possessing cocaine and running a cannabis farm at the family home in Dagenham, East London ... A jury in San Diego, California, has found boxing trainer **Mark Anthony Diaz**, 50, guilty of murdering 52-year-old **Hector Gill**, a volunteer boxing coach at the Pacific Coast Boxing Gym in Vista, California. As well as first-degree murder, Diaz was also convicted of attempted murder, assault with a semiautomatic weapon, and criminal threats. The attempted murder charge stemmed from the fact that boxer **Ricardo Gutierrez** and coach **Peter Moreno** were also shot during Diaz' rampage at the Pacific Coast Gym, which took place on April 7, 2010. Diaz' deadly shooting spree was supposedly motivated by the fact that Gutierrez, 21, had left Diaz to work with Gil. Diaz, who is scheduled to be sentenced in June, faces a possibility of 75 years to life behind bars.

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

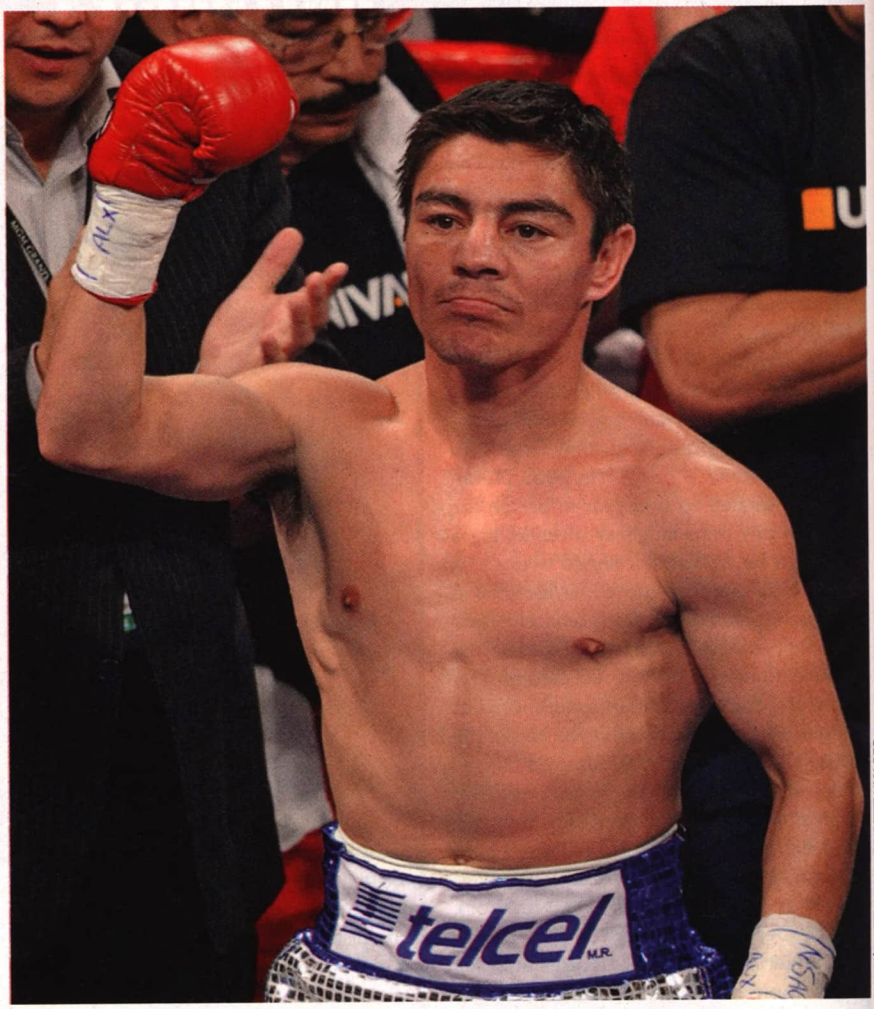


PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

JORGE ARCE

He was thought to be nothing more than a faded veteran with enough lingering popularity to make for an attractive scalp. But instead of boosting the career of beltholder Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. in what was supposed to be a showcase fight on the Manny Pacquiao-Shane Mosley undercard, Jorge Arce went out and stole the show.

An old 31 with a face full of scar tissue, Arce seemed to be in decline since a points loss to Cristian Mijares in April 2007. He looked bad in 2009 losses to Vic Darchinyan and Simphiwe Nongqayi, and, though he'd put together a five-fight unbeaten streak, few gave him much of a chance against Vazquez Jr., especially not at 122 pounds, arguably four classes above his prime weight.

"El Travieso" went right after the 26-year-old, challenging him to respond to his relentless pressure. Vazquez Jr. complied, resulting in a hotly contested, all-action thriller. Clowning, bleeding, and brawling, Arce fought better than he had in years. He survived a knockdown at the end of the fourth, took control late, and stopped Vazquez Jr. early in the 12th round to earn his fourth belt in three divisions and at least one more decent payday.

If only the main event had been as much fun.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

For Period Ended May 22, 2011

Heavyweights: No changes.

Cruiserweights: No changes.

Light Heavyweights: Bernard Hopkins (first last issue) regains the world championship with unanimous decision over Jean Pascal (champion last issue), who falls to number one.

Super Middleweights: Librado Andrade (seventh last issue) leaves after losing to Aaron Pryor Jr. Everyone rated eight and below advances one spot each. Thomas Oosthuizen debuts at 10.

Middleweights: Daniel Geale (fourth last issue) and Sebastian Sylvester (second last issue) switch places, powered by Geale's decision victory over Sylvester.

Junior Middleweights: No changes.

Welterweights: Floyd Mayweather (second last issue) tumbles out of the ratings due to inactivity, allowing Victor Ortiz (third last issue) to move to two. Shane Mosley (fourth last issue) drops to eight following his lopsided loss to Manny Pacquiao, who retains his number-one spot. Those rated five through eight move up two places each due to Mosley's fall, and Mayweather's departure allows Selcuk Aydin (10th last issue) to move to nine and Kell Brook to debut at 10.

Junior Welterweights: No changes.

Lightweights: No changes.

Junior Lightweights: No changes.

Featherweights: Bernabe Concepcion (eighth last issue) departs after losing to Juan Martinez at junior lightweight. Concepcion's exit allows Rafael Marquez (ninth last issue) and Jhonny Gonzalez (10th last issue) to advance one slot each. Mikey Garcia debuts at 10.

Junior Featherweights: Jorge Arce replaces Jeff Mathebula at nine after his stoppage of Wilfredo Vazquez Jr., who remains at 10.

Bantamweights: No changes.

Junior Bantamweights: Tepparith Singwancha debuts at six thanks to a decision over Drian Francisco (sixth last issue), who drops to 10. Kohei Kono (eighth last issue) exits after a pair of losses, allowing Juan Alberto Rosas (ninth last issue) and Cesar Seda (10th last issue) to climb one rung each.

Flyweights: No changes.

Junior Flyweights: Adrian Hernandez bolts to the top contender spot thanks to stopping Gilberto Keb Baas (first last issue), who falls to two and pushes down both Omar Nino (second last issue) and Ivan Calderon (third last issue) one rung each. Rodel Mayol (fourth last issue) departs because he is now fighting at junior bantamweight, joined in the exit line by Carlos Tamara (sixth last issue), who lost two of his last three fights. The rearranging allows Brian Viloria (seventh last issue) to bump up to five and Ulises Solis jumps from eight to six, based on his decision over Luis Lazarte (fifth last issue), who drops to nine. The mass movement also enables Juan Carlos Reveco (ninth last issue) and Roman Gonzalez (10th last issue) to jump two spots each. Roman Hirales returns to the ratings at 10, thanks to stopping Jesus Geles.

Strawweights: No changes.

Pound-for-Pound: More proof that boxing's landscape is changing. Floyd Mayweather (second last issue) comes out due to inactivity, allowing everyone rated three through five to move up one place each. Mayweather's departure also makes room for Bernard Hopkins to reenter at 10 and allows Giovani Segura to move from nine to eight and Andre Ward from 10 to nine. Further reshuffling includes the demotion of Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (sixth last issue) to seven, based on weak recent opposition. That change, coupled with Mayweather's exit, allows Wladimir Klitschko (seventh last issue) and Timothy Bradley (eighth last issue) to advance two spots each, to five and six, respectively.

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled by winning a box-off between THE RING's number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

THE RING Ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board, with the participation of THE RING Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world. To see the complete list of our panelists, click on "Ratings" at ringtv.com.

Records provided by boxrec.com.

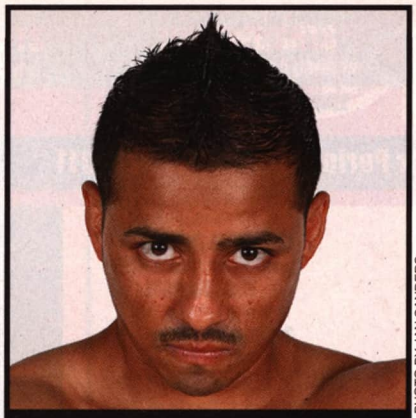


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

POUND FOR POUND

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO** *Welterweight*
2. **SERGIO MARTINEZ** *Middleweight*
3. **NONITO DONAIRE** *Bantamweight*
4. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** *Lightweight*
5. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** *Heavyweight*
6. **TIM BRADLEY** *Junior Welterweight*
7. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM** *Flyweight*
8. **GIOVANI SEGURA** *Junior Flyweight*
9. **ANDRE WARD** *Super Middleweight*
10. **BERNARD HOPKINS** *Light Heavyweight*

The RING RATINGS

For Period Ended May 22, 2011

For weekly updated Ring ratings, go to ringtv.com

WHERE DID HE COME FROM? Previously unranked Adrian Hernandez rockets to the number-one contender spot at junior fly by beating Gilberto Keb Bass.

PHOTO BY HECTOR VIVAS/LATIN CONTENT/GETTY IMAGES

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
Ukraine 55-3 (49)

1. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 42-2 (39)
2. **DAVID HAYE**
England 25-1 (23)
3. **TOMASZ ADAMEK**
Poland 44-1 (28)
4. **ALEXANDER POVETKIN**
Russia 21-0 (15)
5. **RUSLAN CHAGAEV**
Uzbekistan 26-1-1 (17)
6. **EDDIE CHAMBERS**
Philadelphia, PA 36-2 (18)
7. **ALEXANDER DIMITRENKO**
Ukraine 31-1 (21)
8. **DENIS BOYTSOV**
Russia 27-0 (22)
9. **ROBERT HELENIUS**
Germany15-0 (10)
10. **CHRIS ARREOLA**
Riverside, CA 31-2 (27)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 200 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **STEVE CUNNINGHAM**
Philadelphia, PA 24-2 (12)
2. **MARCO HUCK**
Yugoslavia 32-1 (23)
3. **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK**
Poland 45-2-1 (32)
4. **DENIS LEBEDEV**
Russia 22-1 (17)
5. **TROY ROSS**
Canada 24-2 (16)
6. **DANNY GREEN**
Australia 31-3 (27)
7. **GIACOBBE FRAGOMENI**
Italy 28-3-1 (12)
8. **OLA AFOLABI**
England 16-2-3 (7)
9. **GUILLERMO JONES**
Panama 37-3-2 (2
10. **YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ**
Cuba 24-1 (13)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS
Philadelphia, PA 52-5-2 (32)

1. **JEAN PASCAL**
Haiti 26-2-1 (16)
2. **TAVORIS CLOUD**
Tallahassee, FL 22-0 (18)
3. **CHAD DAWSON**
New Haven, CT 30-1 (17)
4. **GLEN JOHNSON**
Jamaica 51-14-2 (35)
5. **NATHAN CLEVERLY**
Wales 22-0 (11)
6. **ADRIAN DIACONU**
Romania 27-3 (15)
7. **KARO MURAT**
Iraq 23-1 (14)
8. **BEIBUT SHUMENOV**
Kazakhstan 11-1 (7)
9. **GABRIEL CAMPILLO**
Spain 20-3 (7)
10. **ISAAC CHILEMBA**
South Africa 19-1-1 (8)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ANDRE WARD**
Oakland, CA 24-0 (13)
2. **LUCIAN BUTE**
Romania 28-0 (23)
3. **CARL FROCH**
England 27-1 (21)
4. **MIKKEL KESSLER**
Denmark 43-2 (32)
5. **ROBERT STIEGLITZ**
Germany 40-2 (23)
6. **SAKIO BIKA**
Cameroon 28-5-2 (19)
7. **GLEN JOHNSON**
Jamaica 51-14-2 (35)
8. **ARTHUR ABRAHAM**
Armenia 32-3 (26)
9. **DIMITRI SARTISON**
Germany 27-1 (17)
10. **THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN**
South Africa 14-0-1 (11)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: SERGIO MARTINEZ
Argentina 47-2-2 (26)

1. **FELIX STURM**
Germany 35-2-1 (15)
2. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia 25-1 (15)
3. **PAUL WILLIAMS**
Augusta, GA 39-2 (27)
4. **SEBASTIAN SYLVESTER**
Germany 34-4-1 (16)
5. **MATTHEW MACKLIN**
England 28-2 (19)
6. **SEBASTIAN ZBIK**
Germany 30-0 (10)
7. **DMITRY PIROG**
Russia 18-0 (14)
8. **DAVID LOPEZ**
Mexico 40-12 (23)
9. **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM**
France 26-0 (17)
10. **MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO**
Mexico 50-5-1 (43)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MIGUEL COTTO**
   Puerto Rico 36-2 (29)
2. **KERMIT CINTRON**
   Reading, PA 32-3-1 (28)
3. **ALFREDO ANGULO**
   Mexico 19-1 (16)
4. **RYAN RHODES**
   England 45-4 (31)
5. **SECHEW POWELL**
   Brooklyn, NY 26-2 (15)
6. **VANES MARTIROSYAN**
   Armenia 29-0 (18)
7. **PAWEL WOLAK**
   Poland 29-1 (19)
8. **SERGIY DZINZIRUK**
   Ukraine 37-1 (23)
9. **SAUL ALVAREZ**
   Mexico 36-0-1 (26)
10. **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE**
    Detroit, MI 30-4 (18)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
   Philippines 53-3-2 (38)
2. **VICTOR ORTIZ**
   Garden City, KN 29-2-2 (22)
3. **ANDRE BERTO**
   Winter Haven, FL 27-1 (21)
4. **JAN ZAVECK**
   Slovenia 31-1 (18)
5. **VYACHESLAV SENCHENKO**
   Ukraine 31-0 (20)
6. **RAFAL JACKIEWICZ**
   Poland 37-9-1 (19)
7. **MIKE JONES**
   Philadelphia, PA 24-0 (18)
8. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA 46-7-1 (39
9. **SELCUK AYDIN**
   Turkey 21-0 (16)
10. **KELL BROOK**
    England 23-0 (16)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
   Palm Springs, CA 27-0 (11)
2. **AMIR KHAN**
   England 25-1 (17)
3. **MARCOS MAIDANA**
   Argentina 30-2 (27)
4. **DEVON ALEXANDER**
   St. Louis, MO 21-1 (13)
5. **ANDREAS KOTELNIK**
   Ukraine 31-4-1 (13)
6. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY 41-6 (28)
7. **LAMONT PETERSON**
   Washington, D.C. 28-1-1 (14)
8. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico 51-7 (35)
9. **LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
   Argentina 28-1 (26)
10. **DANNY GARCIA**
    Philadelphia, PA 21-0 (14)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
Mexico 52-5-1 (38)

1. **BRANDON RIOS**
   Lubbock, TX 27-0-1 (20)
2. **HUMBERTO SOTO**
   Mexico 55-7-2 (32)
3. **ROBERT GUERRERO**
   Gilroy, CA 29-1-1 (18)
4. **JOHN MURRAY**
   England 31-0 (18)
5. **MICHAEL KATSIDIS**
   Australia 27-4 (22)
6. **MIGUEL ACOSTA**
   Venezuela 28-4-2 (22)
7. **PAULUS MOSES**
   Namibia 27-1 (19)
8. **URBANO ANTILLON**
   Mexico 28-2 (20)
9. **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
   Mexico 28-3 (12)
10. **ANTONIO DEMARCO**
    Mexico 25-2-1 (18)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MZONKE FANA**
   South Africa 30-4 (12)
2. **RICKY BURNS**
   Scotland 31-2 (8)
3. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
   Japan 17-0 (14)
4. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
   Puerto Rico 24-1-1 (15)
5. **JORGE SOLIS**
   Mexico 40-2-2 (29)
6. **JUAN CARLOS SALGADO**
   Mexico 22-1-1 (16)
7. **JORGE LINARES**
   Venezuela 30-1 (19)
8. **TAKAHIRO AO**
   Japan 21-2-1 (10)
9. **ARGENIS MENDEZ**
   Dominican Republic 18-1 (9)
10. **JASON LITZAU**
    St. Paul, MN 28-2 (21)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA**
   Cuba 20-0 (16)
2. **CHRIS JOHN**
   Indonesia 45-0-2 (22)
3. **ORLANDO SALIDO**
   Mexico 35-11-2 (23)
4. **JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ**
   Puerto Rico 30-1 (27)
5. **DANIEL PONCE DE LEON**
   Mexico 41-3 (34)
6. **CRISTOBAL CRUZ**
   Mexico 39-12-2 (23)
7. **ELIO ROJAS**
   Dominican Republic 22-1 (13)
8. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico 39-6 (35)
9. **JHONNY GONZALEZ**
   Mexico 48-7 (42)
10. **MIKEY GARCIA**
    Oxnard, CA 25-0 (21)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
   Japan 38-4-3 (24)
2. **AKIFUMI SHIMODA**
   Japan 23-2-1 (10)
3. **RYOL LI LEE**
   Japan 17-2-1 (8)
4. **POONSAWAT KRATINGDAENGGYM**
   Thailand 44-2 (30)
5. **TAKALANI NDLOVU**
   South Africa 32-6 (18)
6. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
   Cuba 8-0 (6)
7. **RICARDO CORDOBA**
   Panama 37-3-2 (23)
8. **STEVE MOLITOR**
   Canada 33-2 (12)
9. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico 57-6-2 (44)
10. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ JR.**
    Puerto Rico 20-1-1 (17)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **NONITO DONAIRE**
   Philippines 26-1 (18)
2. **ANSELMO MORENO**
   Panama 30-1-1 (10)
3. **JOSEPH AGBEKO**
   Ghana 28-2 (22)
4. **ABNER MARES**
   Mexico 21-0-1 (13)
5. **FERNANDO MONTIEL**
   Mexico 44-3-2 (34)
6. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
   Armenia 36-3-1 (27)
7. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI 44-2 (22)
8. **YONNHY PEREZ**
   Colombia 20-2-1 (14)
9. **KOKI KAMEDA**
   Japan 25-1 (16)
10. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
    Philippines 28-2-3 (17)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **HUGO CAZARES**
   Mexico 34-6-2 (24)
2. **TOMAS ROJAS**
   Mexico 36-12-1 (24)
3. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
   Argentina 34-0-2 (19)
4. **NOBUO NASHIRO**
   Japan 14-3-1 (9)
5. **YOTA SATO**
   Japan 21-2-1 (11)
6. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
   Thailand 16-2 (10)
7. **CRISTIAN MIJARES**
   Mexico 41-6-2 (18)
8. **JUAN ALBERTO ROSAS**
   Mexico 32-6 (26)
9. **CESAR SEDA**
   Puerto Rico 20-1 (15)
10. **DRIAN FRANCISCO**
    Philippines 20-1-1 (16)

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM
Thailand 80-3-1 (44)

1. **DAISUKE NAITO**
   Japan 36-3-3 (23)
2. **TAKEFUMI SAKATA**
   Japan 36-6-2 (17)
3. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
   Mexico 30-2 (23)
4. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
   Panama 22-2 (17)
5. **DENKAOSAN KAOVICHIT**
   Thailand 52-3-1 (22)
6. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
   South Africa 27-2 (18)
7. **JULIO CESAR MIRANDA**
   Mexico 35-5-1 (28)
8. **ROCKY FUENTES**
   Philippines 28-6-2 (18)
8. **MILAN MELINDO**
   Philippines 24-0 (8)
10. **EDGAR SOSA**
    Mexico 42-6 (25)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: GIOVANI SEGURA
Mexico 27-1-1 (23)

1. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
   Mexico 21-1 (13)
2. **GILBERTO KEB BAAS**
   Mexico 35-21-4 (22)
3. **OMAR NINO**
   Mexico 30-4-2 (12)
4. **IVAN CALDERON**
   Puerto Rico 34-2-1 (6)
5. **BRIAN VILORIA**
   Waipahu, HI 28-3 (16)
6. **ULISES SOLIS**
   Mexico 33-2-3 (21)
7. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
   Argentina 26-1 (15)
8. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
   Nicaragua 28-0 (23)
9. **LUIS ALBERTO LAZARTE**
   Argentina 48-10-2 (18)
10. **RAMON HIRALES**
    Mexico 16-2-1 (9)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
   South Africa 21-0 (15)
2. **KAZUTO IOKA**
   Japan 7-0 (5)
3. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
   Thailand 35-1-1 (13)
4. **RAUL GARCIA**
   Mexico 30-1-1 (18)
5. **DONNIE NIETES**
   Philippines 28-1-3 (15)
6. **FLORANTE CONDES**
   Philippines 25-5-1 (21)
7. **JUAN PALACIOS**
   Nicaragua 28-3 (21)
8. **DENVER CUELLO**
   Philippines 26-4-6 (16)
9. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
   Japan 24-4 (10)
10. **MUHAMMAD RACHMAN**
    Indonesia 64-10-5 (33)

RYAN OUT LOUD

by Jeff Ryan

'Weather Vain

By now, it should be clear to everyone that Floyd Mayweather wants to be Rocky Marciano. Not the Marciano who had his mettle tested by that nasty nose cut against Ezzard Charles and the trips to the floor arranged by the fists of Jersey Joe Walcott and Archie Moore. Certainly not the Marciano who liked to trade bombs until his rival's legs and backbone turned rubbery at roughly the same time. Not even the Marciano who was so obsessed with money that he'd take smaller appearance fees in order to be paid in cash and was known to pummel pay phones that stole his dimes.

No, if "Money" Mayweather's love of the dollar really lived up to his nickname, he wouldn't be leaving a purse of at least $25-million on the negotiating table by avoiding a showdown with Manny Pacquiao. Where Mayweather wants to be Marciano, apparently, is in the record. The *undefeated* and *untied* record. To Mayweather, everything is about retiring with that big, fat 0. To which a perplexed industry, one that isn't used to seeing its all-time greats leave business unfinished, is responding with a big, fat "Oh?"

What's the matter with this guy? Never mind. We've only got four pages here.

Languishing on the sidelines amid a slew of legal problems and what seems to be an ever-decreasing interest in regaining the title of World's Best Fighter, "Pretty-But-Not-Gritty Boy" Mayweather is to blame for screwing up the end of not just one great career, but two. Because he's been the biggest roadblock to a superfight with Pacquiao, he's partly responsible for the junk fights the Filipino has been engaged in over the past year or so. Pacquiao vs. damaged goods Antonio Margarito.

As for his own career, Mayweather seems content to either rest on his laurels ("rest on his laurels" is a more polite way of saying sit on his lazy ass) or go out in the near future with victories over people he'd be favored to beat if he was wearing 30-ounce gloves and two walking casts. Having covered the likes of Larry Holmes, Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvin Hagler, Roberto Duran, Alexis Arguello, Thomas Hearns, Mike Tyson, Bernard Hopkins, Pernell Whitaker, Julio Cesar Chavez, Oscar De La Hoya, and Evander Holyfield, I'm not used to seeing a superstar of the sport avoid the biggest challenge out there for him. A great champion is usually drawn to his toughest rival as though being sucked into a whirlpool. He *wants* the megafight and will usually do anything and everything to make it happen.

In the past, no negotiating obstacle has ever been too big to overcome. Tyson-Michael Spinks seemed impossible to pull off at one point, but the contracts were eventually signed. Leonard-Hagler came together despite more petty-bickering than you'll find in a 50-year marriage. Don King and Bob Arum once despised each other, yet bit their lips, held their noses, shook hands, and made deals as though they were best friends. That's because in all of those cases, both sides *wanted* the big fight to take place. Mayweather doesn't.

The funny thing about all this is that Mayweather isn't exactly Floyd Patterson being given a blindfold and cigarette and marched up the ring steps toward Sonny Liston. He'd have a decent shot of beating Pacquaio and might even be favored. But Money doesn't want to take the *chance* of losing. It's too bad he doesn't realize that a close defeat to Pacquiao in a spirited effort would do more to enhance his legacy than a perfect mark and an avoidance of his toughest test ever will.

A ring immortal should be remembered for doing his best ducking *inside* the ring.

HALL NO, HE WON'T GO?

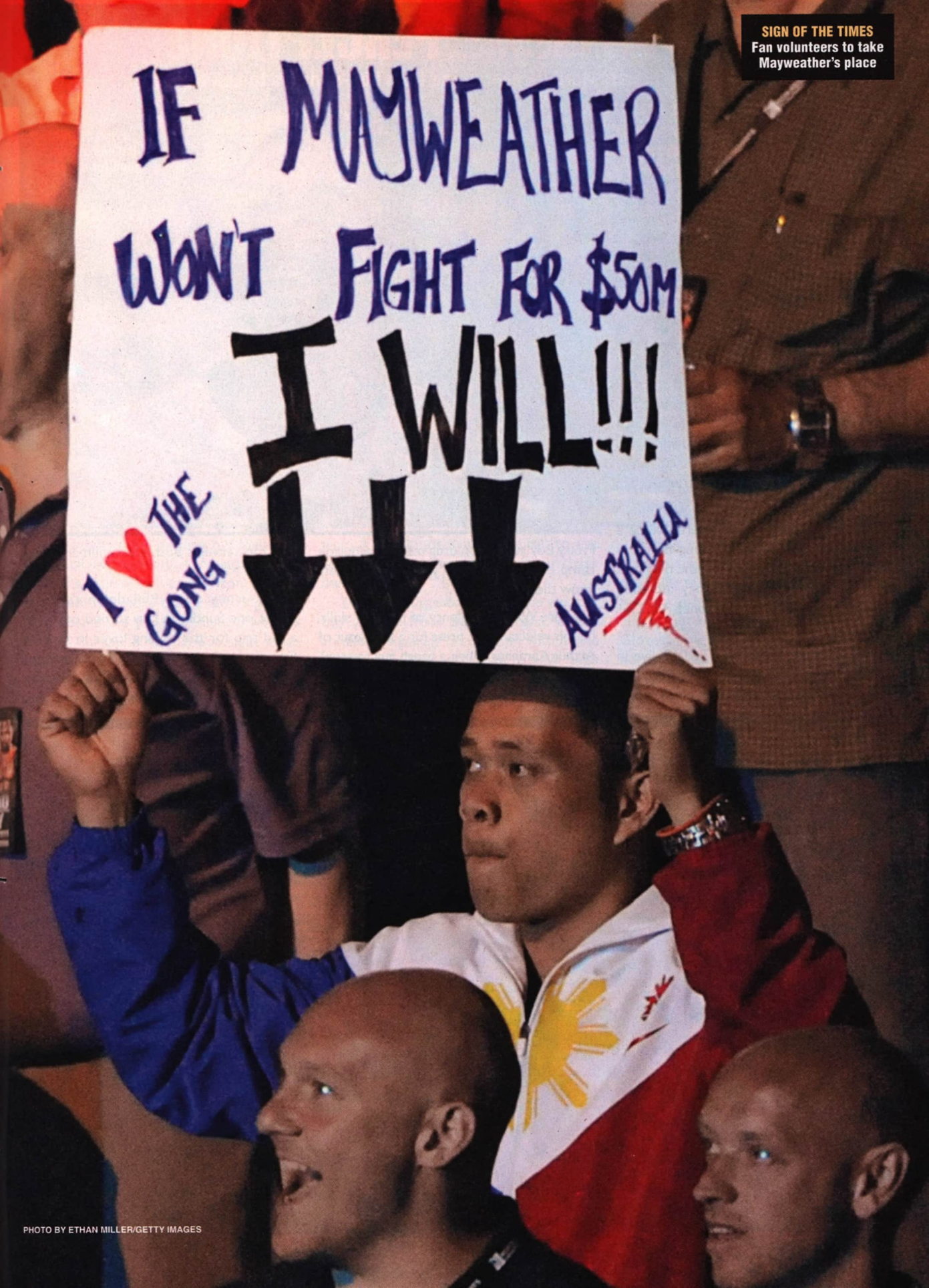
As the always-insightful Ivan Goldman pointed out in his column in the July 2011 issue, boxers who cheat or display other examples of questionable character just don't seem to be the pariahs in the eyes of Hall of Fame voters that baseball's bad boys are. Which is why, despite my previous questions about the worthiness of Shane Mosley for a spot in Canastota, my feeling was that he probably was going to be making a speech and riding in a parade one June day in the future.

Following his dreadful showing against Pacquiao, however, one has to wonder if Mosley may have turned off a whole lot more of the people who'll be determining his Hall credentials. In what was likely (and hopefully) the last major bout of an 18-year career, he made the decision to be a survivor rather than a competitor and ended up ripping off a sellout crowd at Las Vegas' MGM Grand and a pay-per-view audience that had forked over $54.95 per household. (The equivalent of a few bags of groceries or a full tank of gas.) Not exactly the last image you should leave the world with.

Perhaps the Hall voters will overlook the pacifism against Pacquiao (as well as the performance-enhancing drug use) and judge "Sugar Shane" strictly on his titles in three weight classes and his victories over De La Hoya. But in light of this latest embarrassment, the debate certainly becomes a more interesting one, doesn't it?

FIVE! Mosley stopped fighting after third-round knockdown

PHOTO BY GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



SIGN OF THE TIMES
Fan volunteers to take Mayweather's place

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS

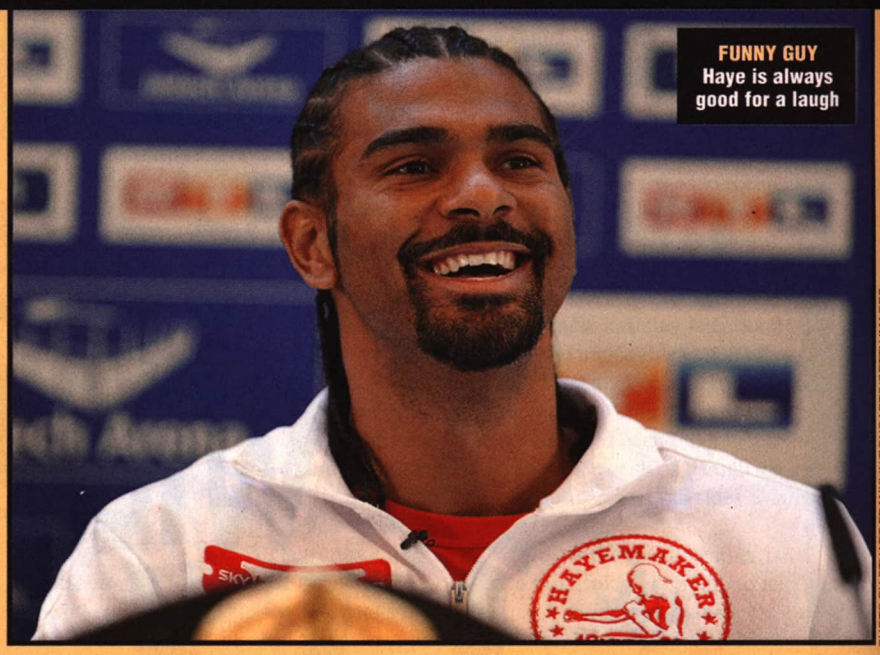
The last word on everything from bull-slingers to bulldozers:

• NBA players like to think of themselves as the undisputed rulers of trash talking, but they're minor leaguers compared to the Sweet Science's bigmouths. David Haye made me laugh when he said, "I believe Wladimir Klitschko is solely responsible for killing the heavyweight division. He is manufactured and boring." Wow! Did you ever hear an NBA player blame a rival for ruining the entire Western Conference?

• Madison Square Garden is undergoing an $850-million renovation, with much of the work taking place this summer and next. The good news: You can buy a seat from the place if you have a spare $549.99 lying around. The bad news: Nobody sat in that seat for such memorable events as Ali-Frazier I and II and Duran-Davey Moore. The seats currently being removed and pedaled were installed in the '90s.

• It's now officially official: There will be a new Nassau Coliseum on Long Island in 2015. So that means the end of the old place, whose modest boxing history included Frazier-George Foreman II, Cooney-Ron Lyle, and Tyson-Steve Zouski.

• Will the date of March 13, 2010, live in infamy? That's when Mayweather-Pacquiao was originally supposed to take place before Pretty Boy insisted on drug testing, Pacquiao's camp balked, and, well, you unfortunately know the rest.



FUNNY GUY
Haye is always good for a laugh

PHOTO BY STUART FRANKLIN/BONGARTS/GETTY IMAGES

• Andre Ward has plenty of physical skills, but his reluctance to press for a knockout of Arthur Abraham (albeit a tough guy to stop), was disappointing. Ward is a superb technician, but that's one of those boxing words that can serve as both a compliment and a criticism.

• A journey down Philadelphia's Broad Street one Sunday in May turned out to be a sad trip for the boxing lover in me. The first ancient ruin along the route was Joe Frazier's Gym. It's closed and for sale now, and the letters have even been removed

DEATH OF AN INSTITUTION
Gallo's career spanned five decades

PHOTO BY SUSAN WATTS/NEW YORK DAILY NEWS/GETTY IMAGES

COASTING HOME
Pressing for a kayo against Abraham would have boosted Ward's appeal

PHOTO BY CRAIG BENNETT/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

from the side of the building, but their outline is still easy to read on the façade. Next came the shuttered Blue Horizon, the tiny fight club that more than a few ringsiders have labeled the greatest place to watch a fight in the US. Finally, about eight miles down the road from The Blue sat mounds of dirt behind a chain-link fence, all that remains of the once-great mecca of maul, the Spectrum. A sign on the fence urged fans to visit rememberthespectrum.com to purchase memorabilia.

(Here's a suggestion: Go to the website, buy a brick from the old arena, whack someone squarely on the chin with it, and you'll know what it felt like to have been Matthew Saad Muhammad throwing his right cross.)

Maybe not all is lost when it comes to Philly boxing, though. Jesse Hart, a 21-year-old Philly middleweight and the son of former local hero and destroyer Cyclone Hart, just won the National Golden Gloves, a big step on the way to what he hopes is a shot at the 2012 Olympics. Jesse, unlike his dad, is a smooth stylist with limited pop.

Gotham City Pity

The word "institution" is so overused in sports writing these days that the scribes who routinely insert it into every story ought to be confined to one. There are rare occasions, however, when the word truly fits. Sports fans, particularly boxing enthusiasts, lost a treasured institution in May when Bill Gallo, the New *York Daily News'* full-time cartoonist and part-time boxing writer, died of pneumonia at the age of 88.

For countless males living in the New York Metropolitan Area for the past 51 years, picking up the *Daily News* and flipping to this man's artwork in the sports section was as much a part of the morning routine as brushing one's teeth. Gallo's cartoons were thought-provoking and topical, sometimes tender, sometimes touching, and often hilarious. No star, athlete or sport, escaped being a target of his sense of humor, and because he loved the fight game so much, it was prominent in his satire.

Countless cartoons come to mind, but a few stand out. After Muhammad Ali was woefully out-of-shape for one of his title defenses (against Alfredo Evangelista, if memory serves me right), Gallo portrayed him pushing his oversized stomach in a wheelbarrow. When Ali defeated Joe Frazier in Superfight II, "The Greatest" was depicted shattering the words, "Ali Is Finished!," with his right cross. In one of his very finest cartoons, Gallo once traced the lineage of the heavyweight crown with a headshot of every titlist. That one drawing did more to illustrate what "the man who beat the man who beat the man" means than anything anyone could have written.

From Sugar Ray Robinson to Tyson to Pacquiao, Gallo sketched them all. So beloved was Gallo in the fistic community that a 40-page memorial that ran in the *Daily News* featured the reminiscences of Frazier, Holmes, Angelo Dundee, Gerry Cooney, Teddy Atlas, Lou Duva, and Bert Sugar, full-page tribute ads from Top Rank, HBO, and Showtime, and a half-page ad purchased by the Klitschko Brothers.

Just a few days after the passing of Gallo, who also wrote an occasional boxing column, we were reminded of how much is lost whenever another one of the few remaining fight guys in the newspaper business exits. Accompanying a story on the Yankees' Jorge Posada removing himself from the lineup before a game against the Red Sox was a sidebar that listed famous quitters. In his description of Duran's "No Mas," some fathead wrote, "Leonard pounds Duran into submission in their infamous rematch in New Orleans..." Pounded into *submission*? At the time he surrendered, Duran trailed by two points on two cards and one point on another and had never been seriously hurt.

No, there are no more Gallos out there, just too many imposters who should be sent to the gallows. ■

DIGGING DEEP

by Ivan Goldman

HAPPY MANNY
Just a tune-up, nothing personal

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Promises, Promises

Ancient Greek mythology tells the sorry tale of Prometheus, who was chained to a rock and doomed to have his liver eaten by eagles each day. The next day, it would grow back, and they'd eat it again. Sugar Shane Mosley is a Prometheus with no memory. Each time an opponent eats his liver, he's surprised.

As if he didn't have enough troubles, Mosley, 39, is also reliving the life of former Minnesota governor Harold Stassen, only he's doing it in boxing trunks. When Stassen campaigned for the Republican presidential nomination in 1948, he was considered a credible candidate. But after he lost, he kept running again and again, and, by the time he announced his candidacy in 1992 at the age of 85, everyone but Stassen understood something wasn't quite right with Stassen.

When Sugar Shane was a young undefeated fighter on top of the world, he was widely admired for seeking challenges and ducking no one. Back then, I asked him at what point he'd decide to hang up his gloves. Lots of world-class fighters say they'll leave on top, before they start to slip. Of course few ever do. But Mosley replied, "They're going to have to show me it's time to retire."

Well, they keep showing him over and over, and it has no effect. He still can't recognize that he's yet another old fighter who promises great feats, starts his contests with what appear to be genuinely high aspirations, and, after a few rounds, just wants to make it to the final bell.

What sets Mosley apart from other old guys who can no longer pull the trigger is that Showtime, CBS, and Bob Arum's Top Rank, the sport's biggest promoter, joined forces to pretend that his challenge to Manny Pacquiao would be one heck of a fight worth $65 (with high-def) per pay-per-view pop. Pacquiao has endured many tough battles and outright wars, and it would be wrong to begrudge him a tune-up. But treating it as if it was a major bout and charging top dollar was no way to keep customers or generate new ones. When you spot a cocker spaniel and shout "Wolf!" who will come when a real one shows up?

Most people who understand this sport also understood Mosley's place in it and weren't terribly surprised by the mediocre result of his challenge against the best fighter in the world. But casual fans got suckered into believing the full-tilt hype put together by hucksters that sold flawed goods at a price that would be absurd even for first-rate fare.

If pay-per-view boxing acted more like Happy Meals or crack cocaine, its price would stabilize. Instead, the cost keeps spiraling out of orbit. At some point, it's going to look around and find it's all alone up there with no suckers in sight.

Think back to the really great fights you've seen in recent years. Most weren't on pay-per-view: Marco Antonio Barrera's battles with Erik Morales; Diego Corrales-Jose Luis Castillo I; Mickey Ward's wars with Arturo Gatti; Israel Vazquez-Rafael Marquez I, II, and III. They were all on HBO or Showtime. And non-premium networks like ESPN2, Fox, and Telefutura have come up with some beauties of their own.

It is only a matter of time before one of these phony $65 "superfights" lays a spectacular stink bomb, something that will make Mosley-Pacquiao look like the "Thrilla in Manila." Whether the defining stinko night is sponsored by Showtime or HBO won't matter to the public. Both networks will be equally damaged, along, of course, with the sport of boxing.

Hard-core fans purchase pay-per-view fights because they don't want to miss them, which doesn't necessarily mean they expect them to be the best contests. Still, it's not easy to drive off these fans. They know the score, and, when one fails to meet expectations, they'll still be there for the next one.

But if you try to disguise Harold Stassens as the real thing, those casual fans who spell the difference between a decent night and a bonanza will jump off the boxing trolley before it jumps the tracks and lands upside down in a ditch.

PREDICTABLE
Mosley promised much but delivered little

PHOTO BY CHRIS TROTMAN/GETTY IMAGES

WHAT KNOCKDOWN? Referee Bayless blew the call

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

OFF TV Live fans also saw Arreola (left) stop Aguilera

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA

Magoo City

• In round 10, Mosley stepped on Pacquiao's foot and shoved him, forcing him to the canvas (a dirty trick you'll find depicted in Chapter 5 of my 2009 novel *The Barfighter*). Referee **Kenny Bayless** fell for it, calling it a knockdown. Sure, given the one-sided nature of the fight, the mistake didn't matter, but some nights an error like that can alter everything. Bayless, one of my favorite refs, is in a slump. Let's hope he pulls out of it.

• To the clueless **MGM Grand fans** who didn't take their seats until the main event, missing Jorge Arce's exciting 12th-round stoppage of Wilfredo Vazquez Jr.

• To **Showtime** and **Top Rank**, which never eased up on their reality programming and extraneous hype even on fight night, dragging viewers through yet additional interviews, songs (not just the national anthems), and other foolishness after the co-feature instead of letting Pacquiao and Mosley get into the ring and fight already.

• A Magoo Lite to **Joe Cortez** for being too quick to break Arce and Vazquez in the later rounds. After all that action, they'd earned the right to clinch.

• Arthur Abraham's promoter insisted no Californian could referee the "Super Six" bout with Californian Andre Ward in Carson, California. So they sent all the way to Puerto Rico for **Luis Pabon**, who prohibited inside fighting altogether, repeatedly breaking the fighters for no good reason. He needlessly changed the character of the fight, enabling Abraham to employ his long-distance peek-a-boo strategy—and lose anyway. Incidentally, anyone else get the feeling that Abraham watched too many Winky Wright fights when he was a kid?

• Lightweight Raymundo Beltran scored a paralyzing uppercut in the eighth round against favorite Sharif Bogere in Primm, Nevada. Bogere, staggered, grabbed Beltran and pulled him down to the canvas in a slow-motion tackle. Amazingly, referee **Robert Byrd** called it a slip, allowing this cheap trick to succeed. The correct call? A knockdown plus a point deduction from Bogere for his blatantly obvious foul. Instead of a unanimous decision for Bogere, the scores would have added up to a majority draw, a far more accurate outcome in a bloody, hard-fought *ShoBox* contest.

• To **Showtime** again. When it brought us the Super Six Ward-Abraham bout, instead of replaying the crappy Mosley-Pacquiao contest from the previous week, why didn't the network give viewers Chris Arreola's heavyweight contest against Nagy "Dominican Dynamite" Aguilera, which was the lead-up bout in Carson, California? Even when he's fat, Arreola gives fans their money's worth. But in this one, he weighed in at an astonishingly non-jiggly 234 pounds and faced well-schooled Aguilera, 16-6 (11), out of Newburgh, New York, who, unlike Mosley, didn't just talk the talk. Aguilera never stopped trying and never went down, but Arreola was on a mission. The action didn't cease until Raul Caiz Jr. had to step in at 1:15 of the third round and protect a helpless Aguilera from himself.

Apparently the network thought it had to keep its Super Six shows pristine, not sullying them with anything as crass as an undercard bout. But as tournament fighters suffered injuries and dropped out, Showtime has had to make up tournament rules as it went along anyway. Heck, that's boxing. It doesn't always go as planned, but some of those surprises are nice ones. While viewers at home were short-changed, fans on the scene saw the better fight.

A Pair Of Futches

The night a sharp, determined Vic Darchinyan stopped a listless Yonnhy Perez in Los Angeles, the best bout of the night by far was a little four-rounder between junior lightweights **Juan Reyes**, 1-1(0) and **Azat Hovhannesyan**, 0-1. A smart promoter would jump at the chance to get either one of these crowd-pleasers on his next card. They threw more big shots in 12 minutes than Floyd Mayweather did in his last 10 fights.

Ivan Goldman can be reached at ivangoldman@yahoo.com.

THE SMELL OF PROFIT

The Antonio Margarito-Miguel Cotto rematch simmering on a Top Rank burner is the most blatant attempt yet to capitalize on the stink that clings to Margarito. If it works, maybe we'll see a whole new round of contests pitting the master of plaster against all the fighters who faced him when he was assisted by what many of us presume were loads inside his gloves.

With Arum promoting Cotto as well as Margarito, it's a match that can be put together easily, providing that Margarito is healthy. His right eye socket, which required surgery after his beatdown by Pacquiao, apparently wasn't healing as quickly as doctors had hoped. I wish him a full recovery—and then an overdue retirement.

Why Arum is so determined to rub the world's nose in more Margarito is an intriguing question. I've seen Arum perform really admirable good deeds many times. When fighters, trainers, even ex-fight writers, need a helping hand, he is right there.

But he came through the crucible of Harvard Law School, and, in the high-priced competitive world of big-time law, who's right and who's wrong takes a back seat to who wins and who loses. In that lofty circle, there's nothing quite so respected as picking up a big pot with a losing hand.

HAPPY COUPLE
Margarito and Arum: Still joined at the hip

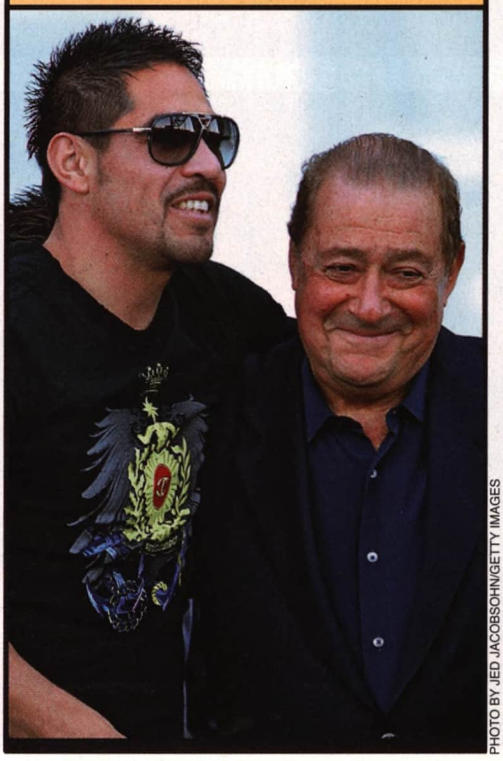


PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/GETTY IMAGES

CAMERA CLICKS

MANNY MANIA EDITION

1. THE CONGRESSMAN & THE COMEDIAN
Yikes, Jimmy Kimmel is not aging well. Oh, never mind, that's not Kimmel. That's the original insult comic, the great Don Rickles, stopping by the Wild Card Boxing Club to watch Manny Pacquiao train. We're probably not qualified to write material for Rickles, but we'll take a guess on what he might have said to Pac-Man: "Manny, as a singer, you're a hell of a boxer."

2. PARIS HILTON'S NEW BFF
Jinkee Pacquiao keeps an extra close eye on the proceedings as her husband shakes hands with the famous socialite at the postfight press conference. The not-particularly-discerning Hilton called the Mosley fight "incredible" and "very amazing." Someone please get her tapes of the Pacquiao-Juan Manuel Marquez fights and the Pacquiao-Erik Morales trilogy. If she liked the Mosley fight, Paris should find those bouts very, very, very super amazing.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

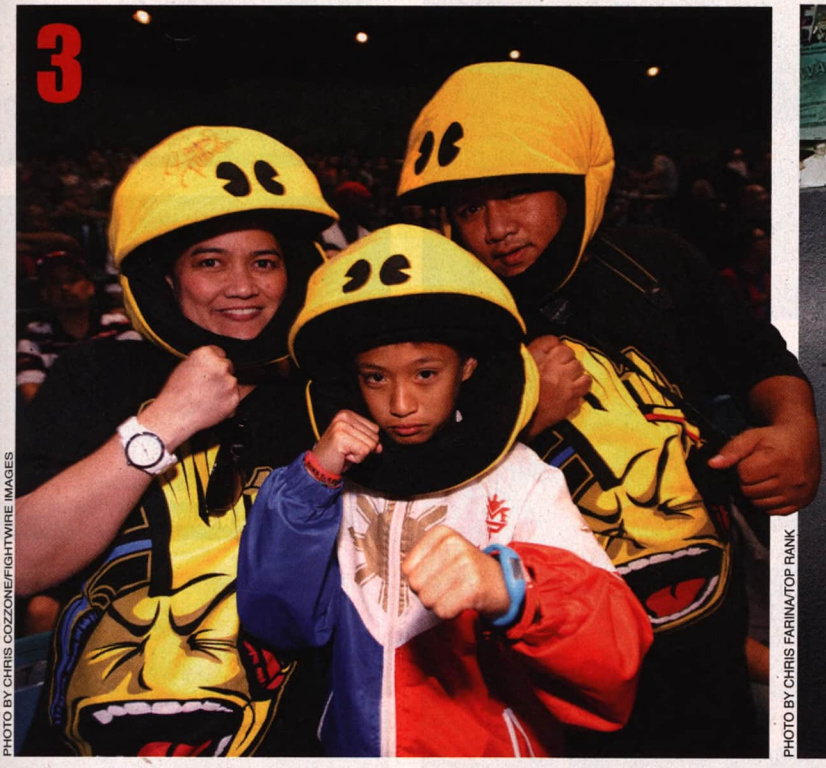
PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

3. BOXING'S ANSWER TO CHEESEHEADS
Green Bay Packers fans still make the most absurd fashion statement in sports, but at least they have some competition for that honor now. A family of Pacquiao fans showed up at the weigh-in for the Shane Mosley fight wearing their "Pac-helmets," ready to eat power pellets, gobble up ghosts, and, of course, cheer for Manny. Worth noting: The Pac-helmets can also be used at fights such as Pacquiao-Mosley, for muffling the boos.

4. WHICH OF THESE NAMES IS NOT LIKE THE OTHERS?
Someone did some editorializing on this list of Pacquiao opponents posted on a door at the Wild Card, adding a couple of earlier fights, specifying weight classes, and making a prediction about the likelihood of a Pacquiao-Mayweather fight. All in all, it's a pretty impressive list of names; yeah, we have a feeling this Pacquiao cat might just get some credit for a decent boxing career, with or without Mayweather.

5. STICKY SITUATION
Well, it only took Pacquiao fan Charlie Thompkins seven words to outdo Floyd Mayweather in the comedy department. Thompkins and thousands more Pac-maniacs flooded the MGM Grand for the Pacquiao-Mosley weigh-in, where Pacquiao's sticky-rice diet allowed him to tip the scales at 145 pounds.

3



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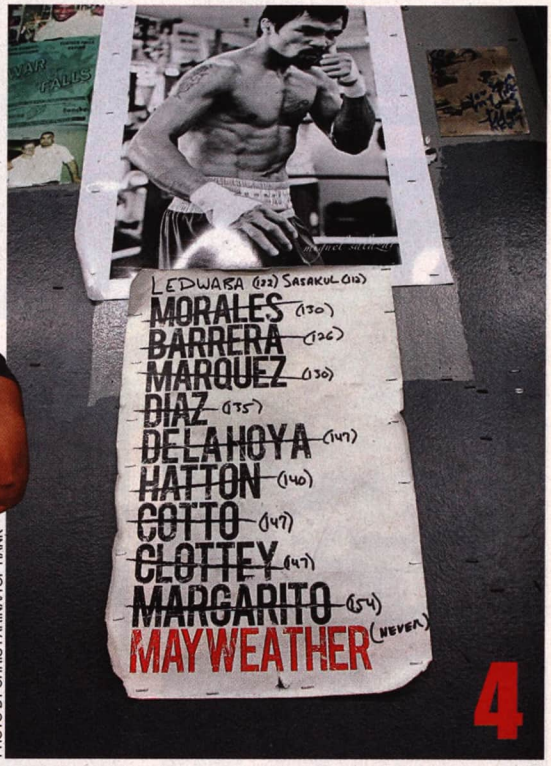

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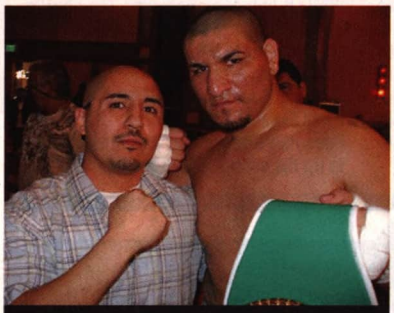
AT THE FIGHTS

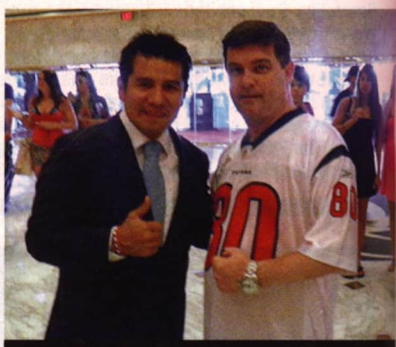
WANT TO SEE YOURSELF IN THE RING MAGAZINE?

Send us your photos from a fight with you posing next to a celebrity, athlete, or other famous person and we will consider it for publication in the magazine. Send photos to celebrityphotos@sepublications.com. Make sure to include your name(s), the celebrity name(s), the fight attended, and your contact information. See you at the fights!

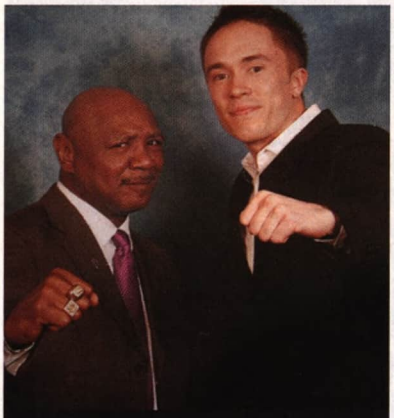


Chris Arreola with Jonny Perez

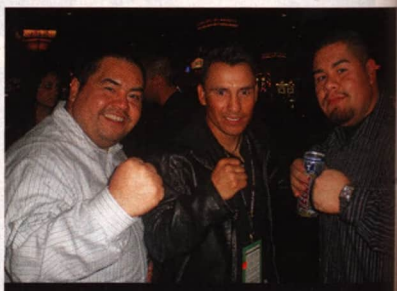
Floyd Mayweather, with Lorenzo Van Eenoo, at Bailey-Ouali



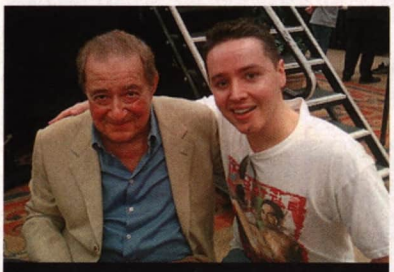
Marco Antonio Barrera, with Colin R. Prescott, at Pacquiao-Mosley



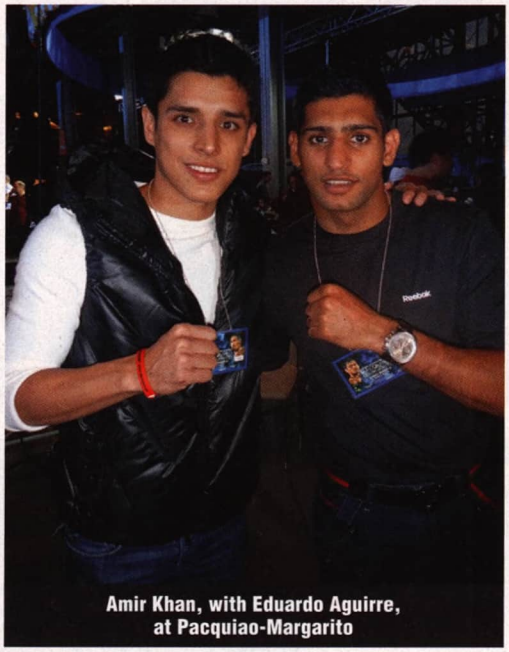
Marvin Hagler with Steven Hankin



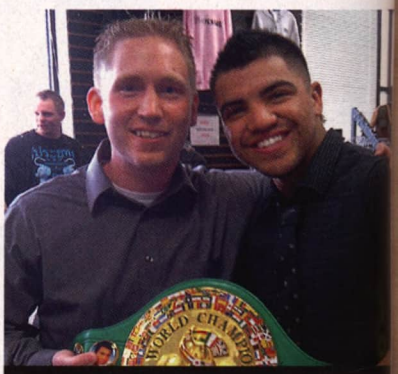
Hugo Cazares, with Jose Ramos and Eduardo Romos, at Mexico vs. Philippines



Bob Arum and Ryan "Professor of Pugilism" Powell at the Cotto-Mayorga weigh-in



Amir Khan, with Eduardo Aguirre, at Pacquiao-Margarito



Victor Ortiz, with Anthony Seim, at Title Boxing Club

Mark Breland, with David McLeod, at the NY Golden Gloves at Madison Square Garden

Andre Ward, with Francisco Calderon, at Ward-Bika weigh-in

The RING

CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

PHOTO BY LENSITSELF PHOTOGRAPHY

Deyra Lizz

Tale of the Tape

Height: 5'3"
Weight: 115 lbs.
Measurements: 34-24-34
Favorite Fighter: Victor Ortiz
Hometown: Nicaragua, Central America
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Where You've Seen Her: 2010 Miss Nicaragua and winner of Most Photogenic (Miss Joven Latina Pageant), *Estrellitas del Sabado* (EstrellaTV), *Wee Bee the Rapping Bear* show (The Complex Theater)
Skills: soccer, dance, singing, boxing

PHOTO BY LENSITSELF PHOTOGRAPHY

To Book Deyra Please contact her agency Ragaza LC Models at www.ragazalcmodels.com, www.ragazas.net, lcmodel@gmail.com, or (818) 679-8766.

PHOTO BY FRANK SIERRA

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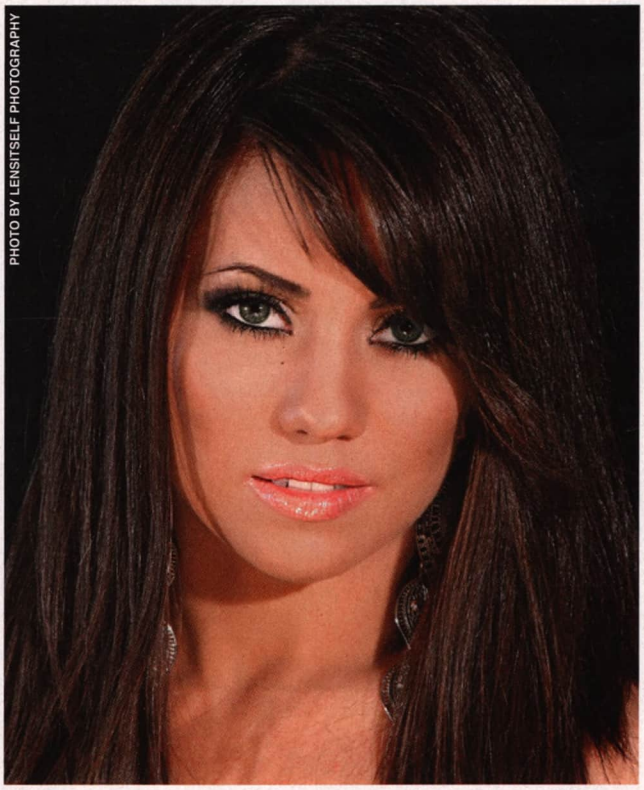


PHOTO BY LENSITSELF PHOTOGRAPHY

Do you know someone who could be the next Ring Card Girl of the Month?

Submit photos and bio to ringcardgirl@sepublications.com.

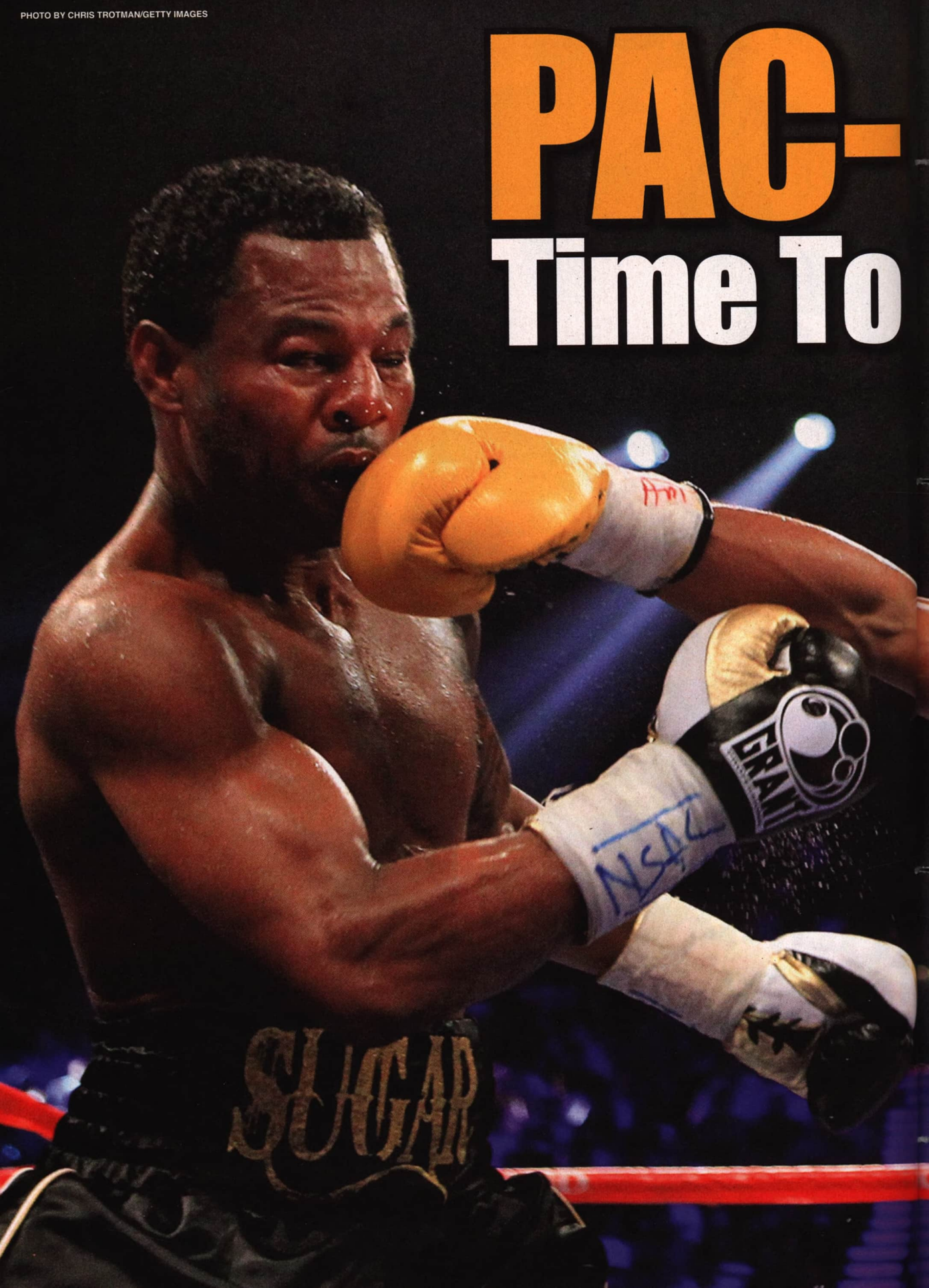


PHOTO BY CHRIS TROTMAN/GETTY IMAGES
PAC-
Time To
SUGAR

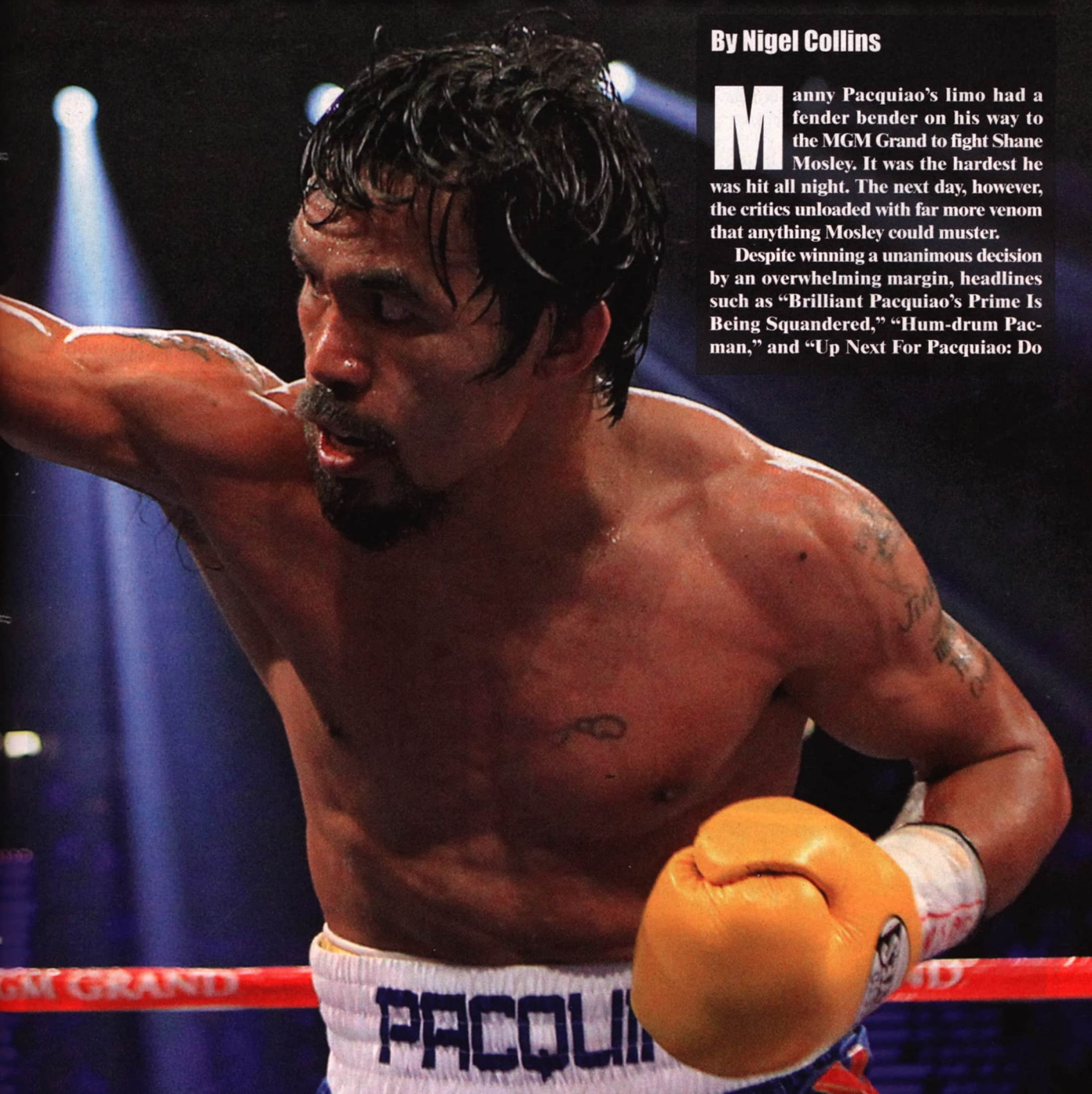
MAN 2011

Fix The Formula

By Nigel Collins

Manny Pacquiao's limo had a fender bender on his way to the MGM Grand to fight Shane Mosley. It was the hardest he was hit all night. The next day, however, the critics unloaded with far more venom that anything Mosley could muster.

Despite winning a unanimous decision by an overwhelming margin, headlines such as "Brilliant Pacquiao's Prime Is Being Squandered," "Hum-drum Pac-man," and "Up Next For Pacquiao: Do



We Care?" greeted the pound-for-pound king at the breakfast table. But that was nothing compared to the barbs that lashed Mosley, whose nickname went from "Sugar Shane" to "Sugar Shame" faster than Pacquiao can fire a six-punch combination.

Promoter Bob Arum was also buffeted by a barrage of criticism for making the match in the first place. But of the three major players in what turned out to be a decidedly unsatisfactory evening of fisticuffs, the 79-year-old curmudgeon has far more experience fending off detractors than the two combatants. By the time the media gathered for the postfight postmortem, Arum was busy hyping Pacquiao's next fight.

The blame game was in full flower by the Monday following the fight, and there's no doubt that there was plenty of blame to spread around. But finger pointing and recriminations are not going to fix the formula that has reduced Pacquiao's dazzling career to a series of derisive mismatches.

The Arum-Pacquiao relationship reminds one of a similar affiliation between Elvis Presley and "Colonel" Tom Parker, the Svengali-like huckster who guided The King of Rock-n-Roll's career.

Parker put Presley in a seemingly endless series of corny, clichéd movies that raked in millions of dollars but never allowed the singer to develop his acting chops. Elvis knew these movies were crap and brooded about it but never escaped Parker's influence.

Arum's formula since Pacquiao brutalized Miguel Cotto in November 2009 has been to cash-in on Manny's Elvis-like popularity by pitting him against a trio of no-hopers in three moneymaking extravaganzas.

The first, against Joshua Clottey, was reasonably palatable because the Ghanaian contender was deemed a suitable substitute when negotiations for a Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather match fell apart. Besides, Cowboys Stadium was the real co-star, and the promotion was a raging success.

The second, against arch villain Antonio Margarito, garnered more than a million pay-per-views and provided plenty of mayhem. Margarito absorbed a frightening beating but bravely kept swinging right up until the final bell, after which he had to undergo surgery to repair the damage Pacquiao inflicted.

Right from the get-go, the Mosley match was viewed with a jaundiced eye. After all, Shane had lost widely to Mayweather and struggled to a sloppy draw with Sergio Mora in his two previous fights. Even so, as the months passed, Arum's publicity machine, aided and abetted by Showtime and its terrestrial broadcast partner CBS, had reduced the stink to a faint odor. All 16,412 (15,422 paid $8,882,600) seats at the MGM Grand Garden Arena were snapped up within 48 hours of going on sale, and expectations for a substantial pay-per-view audience were running high.

Then the fight started.

For all intents and purposes, it ended in the third round when Pacquiao floored Mosley with a right-left combination to the head. Mosley went down hard and looked dazed as he sat blurry-eyed on the canvas trying to gather his senses.

"That's the most legitimate knockdown I got hit with in a long time," said Mosley. "Manny Pacquiao has the type of power I had to watch out for. Usually, I can go in there and punch with guys, but it seemed like he had something a little different. I had to watch out."

Mosley beat referee Kenny Bayless' count and survived Pacquiao's follow-up assault, only to sink into survival mode for the remainder of the fight. The radiance of his Hall of Fame prime dimmed to a flicker, going out in a blaze of glory was the last thing on his mind.

"When you take more risks, then you're susceptible to get knocked out," said Mosley afterward.

Had he given such an honest account of himself *during* the fight, it would have been a different story. As it was, Mosley chose discretion over valor, the memory of which will linger long after his swollen face

GAME CHANGER
When Pacquiao floored Mosley in the third round, it sent "Sugar Shane" into a defensive mode for the remainder of the fight. While few picked Mosley to beat Pacquiao, even fewer expected him to stop trying the first time he was tagged with a big punch.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Promoter Bob Arum joins Pacquiao at the Wild Card Gym during a prefight media day. Arum has done a wonderful job of promoting the Filipino sensation, but he will have to do a better job of matchmaking if he wants to keep his customers happy.

subsides and his multimillion dollar purse has been spent.

We knew Mosley's vast physical gifts had eroded with time and numerous hard fights against other top fighters. But watching him give up on both himself and the fight were unaccustomed sights. Perhaps there was a subtle foreshadowing in the Mosley-Mayweather fight, but it was camouflaged to a large degree when Mosley hit Mayweather with arguably the hardest two punches Floyd has ever taken, in the second round.

Pacquiao, at least, seemed genuinely surprised by Mosley's passive approach, and why shouldn't he be after months of listening to trainer Freddie Roach preach the perils of taking Mosley lightly?

"I'll tell you the truth: I was expecting him to fight with me at least five rounds of the 12 rounds, go toe-to-toe with me so that we could test our power, our stamina," said Pacquiao. "But what could I do if my opponent doesn't want to fight toe-to-toe? It's not my fault."

While it is true that Pacquiao was far less complicit than Mosley or Arum, he can't duck all responsibility for what went down. The constant glove-tapping and hugging in which he and Mosley indulged was bizarre and not a little off-putting. Sportsmanship is fine, but it was, after all, supposed to be a fight.

"Why are you touching gloves? Is he your friend?" an irate Freddie Roach asked his fighter. "I hate that. You're supposed to be trying to knock this guy out."

While it's true that you can't knock out everybody, Pacquiao would do well to remember that it's his fighting ferocity juxtaposed against his nice-guy image that makes him so damn appealing. Neither works as well without the other.

Moreover, as critics are fond of pointing out, Manny seems happy to go along with anything Uncle Bob wants him to do, providing he gets paid top dollar. His "I'm just a fighter; it is my job to fight. My promoter makes the fights" stock answer to any questions concerning his upcoming opponents might be sincere, but it's getting old.

It is a state of affairs that brings us back to the Col. Parker/Elvis Presley analogy. Will

MATCH STATS

Division: Welterweight • **Location:** Las Vegas, Nevada
Date: May 7, 2011 • **Television:** Showtime Pay-Per-View
Promoter: Top Rank • **Referee:** Kenny Bayless (USA)
Official Scores: 120-108 (Dave Moretti), 120-107 (Duane Ford), 119-108 (Glenn Trowbridge)

Manny Pacquiao	Shane Mosley
Age: 32 • **Weight:** 145	**Age:** 39 • **Weight:** 147
Residence: General Santos City, Philippines	**Residence:** Las Vegas, Nevada
Birthplace: Kibawe, Philippines	**Birthplace:** Lynwood, California
Record: 53-3-2 (38)	**Record:** 46-7-1 (39) and 1 no-contest
Ring Ranking: 1	**Ring Ranking:** 8

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL
Pacquiao acknowledges the sellout crowd of 16,412 at the MGM Grand following his victory over Mosley. But better competition is mandatory if Pac-Man is to continue his amazing run at the box office.

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

GRINDING IT OUT
Hampered by leg cramps and Mosley's reluctance to mix it up, Pacquiao kept attacking and eventually won a one-sided decision. It was not, however, one of the pound-for-pound king's better performances.

PHOTO BY GABRIEL BOUYS/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

Pacquiao buck the system where Elvis caved, or will he just go along with the program as long as massive amounts of money keep rolling in?

Perhaps a more significant question is whether or not Arum is smarter than Col. Parker. Let's assume for discussion's sake that he is. What, exactly, can he do about it?

"The problem is, and this is becoming a pattern, Manny doesn't allow any opponent to fight his fight," Arum told the media. "He takes every opponent out of his fight because of his speed and power. You've got to understand what you're watching now. You're watching a phenomenon, the greatest fighter that I've ever seen. Nobody can compete with him. He'll take every fighter out of his game, every single one."

Of course, there's always Floyd Mayweather, the money-spinning mega-match that most of the boxing world has been lusting after for more than two years of mind-numbing frustration. But those who think that Pacquiao-Mayweather is the only Pacquiao fight worth watching are either not paying attention or are fatally delusional.

Think of it this way: What millions of boxing fans around the world saw at the MGM Grand on May 7 was just a sneak preview of what to expect if the elusive fight between the world's two best fighters ever takes place.

If you're looking for explicit violence of the sort that's made Pacquiao famous, Pacquiao-Mayweather isn't the way to go. Simply put, Pacquiao-Mosley was Pacquiao-Mayweather lite.

Arum said that Pacquiao's old nemesis, world lightweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez, was his first choice for Manny's next opponents. If that doesn't happen, the promoter ruminated, the next two in line would be Timothy Bradley and Zab Judah.

Each match has almost as many negatives as positives. Still, as one message-board geek suggested, the best solution just might be to match Manny solely against Mexican fighters whose macho code eliminates any chance of them pulling a Mosley. From Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales to Marquez and Margarito that has been true, so maybe Pacquiao-Marquez III is indeed the best option currently available.

In the end, all the details, wherefores, whys, and rationalizations don't amount to much. At its root, boxing is a simple undertaking with a simple aim: Satisfy the primeval need for violence that is mankind's everlasting heritage in a reasonably civilized manner. All the rest is window dressing.

The giant wave of disappointment that swept over boxing following the Pacquiao-Mosley letdown dampened the sport's immediate future and sent a clear message: It's time to tinker with a formula that has gone stale.

The truth of the matter is that as long as Pacquiao knocks the other guy out, everybody goes home happy. If it's a good fight, all the better. But a knockout almost always saves any fight regardless of what preceded it. Take away that bailout ingredient, and the wheels start to come off the money wagon.

Most of the time, Pacquiao's English-language quotes are parceled out from a small collection of standard answers to standard questions. You know, "Nothing personal; just doing my job" and other endearing phrases that seem, coming from Manny, as genuine as they are repetitive.

ROACH QUOTES

A brief collection of wisdom from perennial Trainer of the Year Freddie Roach

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA/TOP RANK

"I don't think he tried to win the fight, he just tried to survive. When you get to that point in boxing, it's time to call it a day."
—On Shane Mosley's lackluster effort.

"It was a courageous performance by Manny, given the circumstances. He was fighting on one leg for most of the fight, but he still dominated Mosley."
—Commenting on the leg cramps that limited Manny's lateral maneuverability

"I told him in the last round: 'You've got to knock this guy out because it's embarrassing. He told me, 'Coach, I'm trying, I'm trying.'"
—His last-ditch appeal to Manny.

"It's not an easy fight for Manny, but I feel [Tim Bradley] is just not big enough. He would need a miracle."
—His take on one of Arum's mooted opponents for Pacquiao

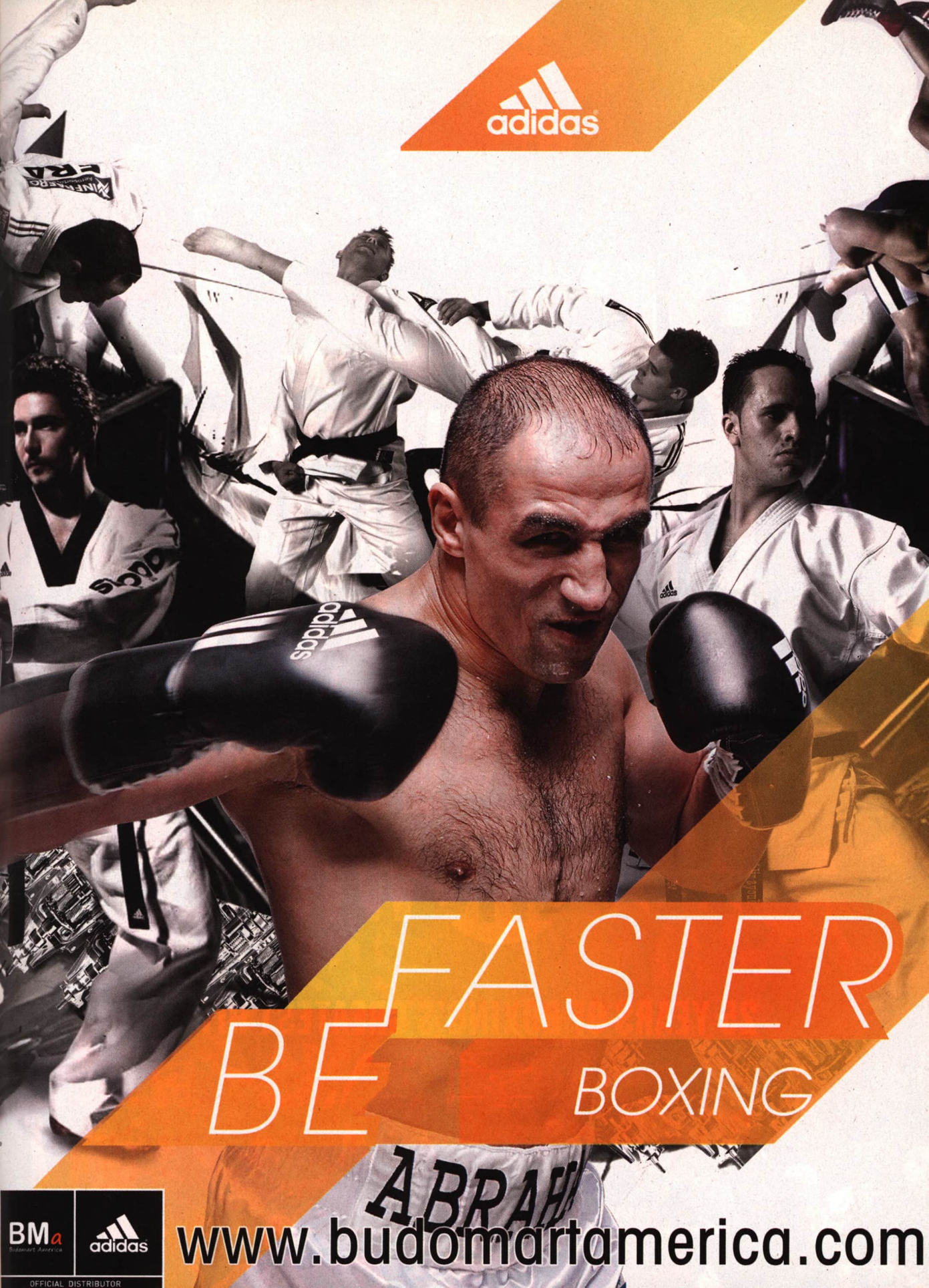
It was another of his pet phrases—the one about making everybody happy—that will echo loudest in the weeks and months to come before he fights again.

"I'm happy because I know I won the fight. But I said my first concern is the satisfaction of the people," said Pacquiao. "I want the people to be satisfied with my performance and to leave happy."

For the first time in memory, boos were heard at a Pacquiao fight, and the people didn't leave happy. Even if Pacquiao didn't realize it in the immediate aftermath of the Mosley fight, it shouldn't take long to sink in.

"Even the people over here are disappointed," reported THE RING's Philippines correspondent Ted Lerner from his home in Angeles City, approximately 60 miles outside of Manila. "The Filipino fans love a good fight. That's why most of the fighters from here are sluggers. That's where Manny's habit of banging his gloves together before attacking comes from. The Filipinos want to see knockouts."

Don't we all. They are both the recipe and remedy for Pacquiao's continued success—and we haven't seen one in a while. ■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THE 10 GREATEST FILIPINO FIGHTERS OF ALL-TIME

By William Dettloff

The presence of two Filipinos—Manny Pacquiao and Nonito Donaire—in the top-10 of everyone's pound-for-pound list is no small deal. We're used to some countries being represented multiple times on the list. Americans more or less dominated the pound-for-pound rankings for years. You could always find a Mexican or two somewhere in the mix, a Puerto Rican, and occasionally a Brit or Cuban.

But Filipinos, for all the success they've had in prize rings over the years, and it's been considerable when you consider the size of the country, have never had a strong pound-for-pound presence—that is, at least for as long as we've been keeping pound-for-pound lists. And then Pacquiao came along. And right behind him came Donaire. More Filipinos are on the way.

This can only mean the time is right for a look at the best Filipino fighters ever. Hence, on the following pages you'll find our selection of the 10 best fighters the Philippines ever produced, plus a bunch of Honorable Mentions who were no slouches either.

Some commonalities were noted among the subjects. Firstly, they all suffered a few defeats over the first couple years of their careers. None of them came out of the Philippines undefeated, not even Pacquiao. They got their losses and their lessons out of the way early and went on to do good work in the US, Asia, or somewhere in between and excelled to one degree or another.

Also, in general, Filipino fighters have been better at winning titles than defending them. Several of our top-10 guys made just a defense or two and then were out of the picture. The notable exception is Flash Elorde, whose reign lasted—well, you'll see when you get to his section.

Lastly, for all you guys who can't wait to turn the page and see Pacquiao at number one, bad news: For as long as a fighter is still active he doesn't get on lists like this one because you can't properly evaluate a man's career until it's over. If you want proof, we've got two words for you: Mike Tyson. So there's no Pacquiao and no Donaire. Not yet, anyway.

1. FLASH ELORDE

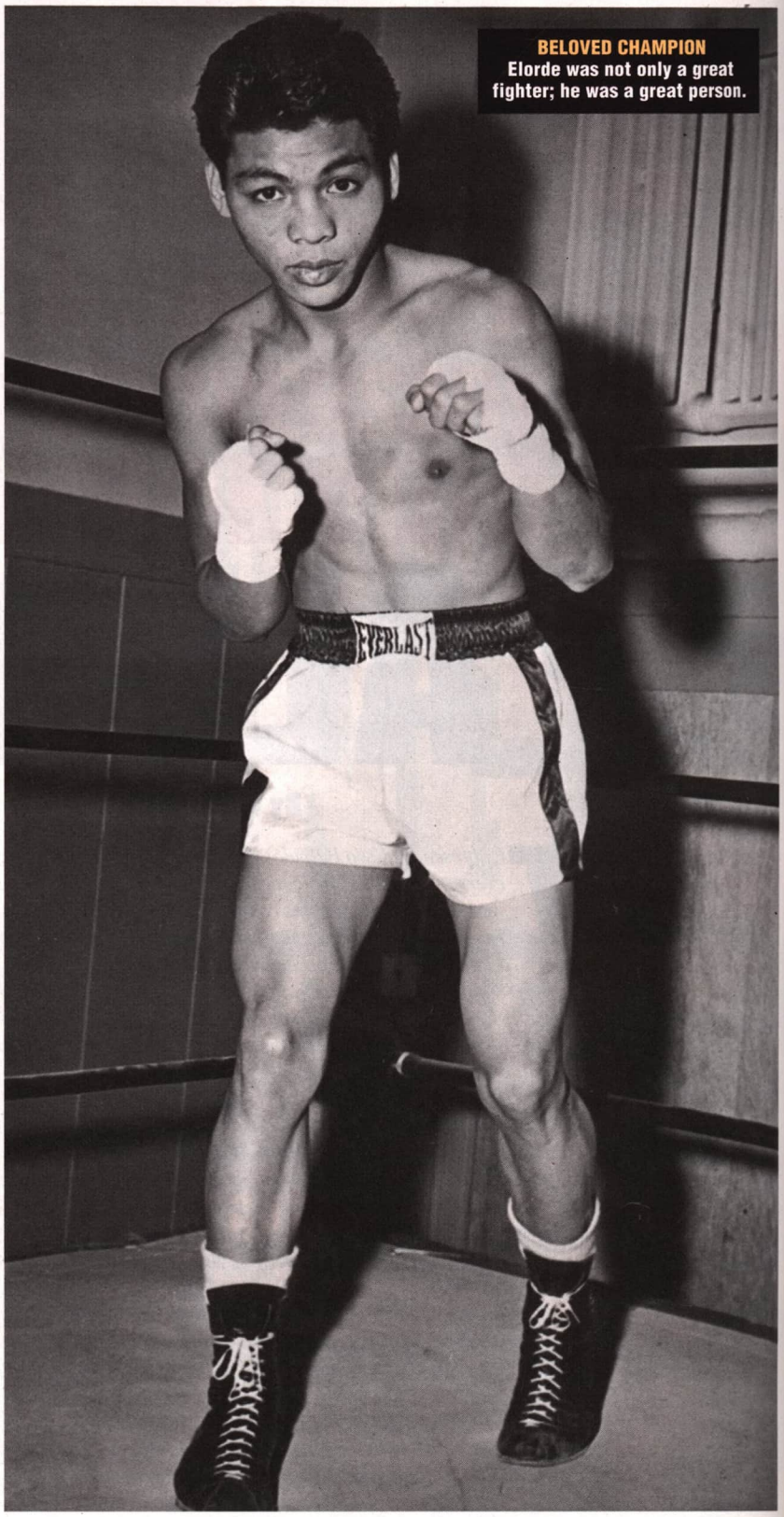
78-33-2 (28) • Junior Lightweight World Champion, 1963-1967

The Filipino people like their superheroes humble, gracious, and a little vulnerable if they can swing all three at the same time. That goes a long way toward explaining the appeal of Flash Elorde, who was Manny Pacquiao about 40 years before there *was* a Manny Pacquiao. That Elorde legitimized the junior lightweight title by making 11 title defenses over a seven-year reign is largely a function of his era and of the presence of the great Carlos Ortiz one division to the north. There's every likelihood that if he were doing business today, Elorde would be a multi-division titleholder like Pacquiao.

It is true Elorde wasn't as dominant as Pacquiao is, and that too may be a function of his era. Elorde lost eight times before American fans had even heard of him. They finally learned what he was about when at 5-1 odds he upset the great Sandy Saddler in a non-title 10-rounder in Manila in July 1955. Filipino fans knew well before then that Elorde was a special fighter. They'd been watching him from the time he turned pro in 1951 and had seen him win Oriental and national titles at bantamweight, featherweight, and lightweight.

Elorde's performance against Saddler got him a title fight rematch in San Francisco in January 1956, which Elorde lost when referee Ray Flores stopped it at 0:59 of the 13th round because of a cut over Elorde's left eye. The fans booed the stoppage as they had booed Saddler's famous roughhouse tactics all night. No matter. Elorde made California his second home and, in 1960, won the world junior lightweight title by butchering 2-1 favorite Harold Gomes in seven rounds in Manila. He floored Gomes eight times before referee Barney Ross (yes, *that* Barney Ross) stopped it. Ross later told the press, "If I had allowed Elorde to land even another push, he might have killed Gomes."

From there, Elorde took off. There was the occasional loss—to Teruo Kosaka in Japan in 1962 (later avenged), to the great Ortiz in a try at the lightweight title in '64—but from 1960 until early 1966, Elorde was all but unstoppable, winning 26 times and losing just twice. He fought six times in '62, four times each in '63, '64, and '65, and five times in '66. It was this pace and consistency that gets him to the top of this list and that got him inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1993. But it wasn't just what he did in the ring that won him the hearts of the Filipino people. It was also his decency and humility. In a business like this, that goes a long way.



BELOVED CHAMPION
Elorde was not only a great fighter; he was a great person.

2. PANCHO VILLA

71-5-4 (22) • World Flyweight Champion 1923-'25

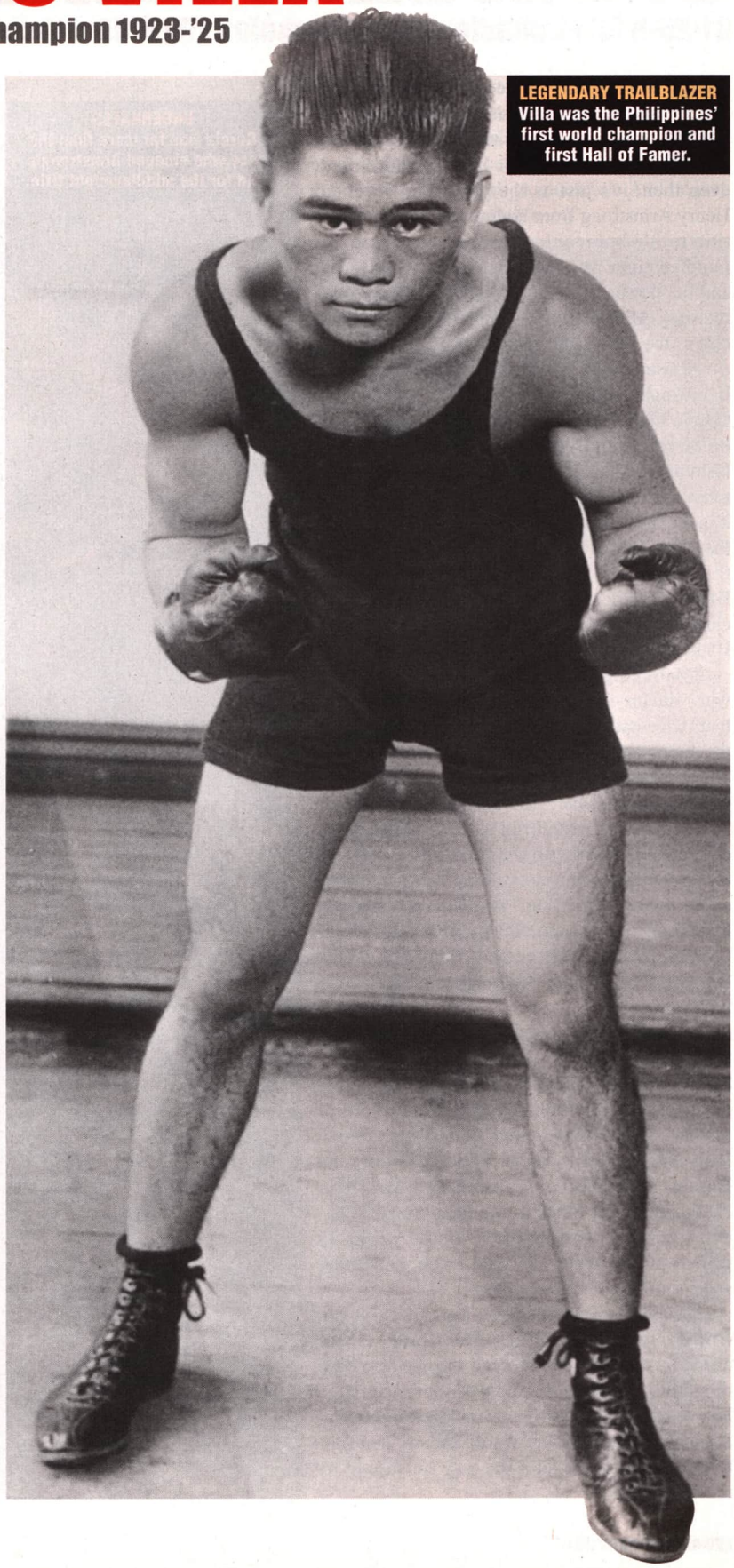
You could almost see it as a blessing that Francisco Guilledo—known in prize-fighting circles as Pancho Villa—died as a young man, apparently at the height of his powers. At just 23 years old, he'd stopped and retired Jimmy Wilde, one of the great fighters of the modern era and likely the greatest flyweight ever. He'd already had 80 pro fights, losing only five of them give or take a few that may have been lost or gained over the years since. And he was famous, with the world's many riches, comforts, and vulgarities laid out before him. It could only go downhill from there.

You couldn't use that to comfort the people of the Philippines, who lost their first world boxing champion at such a young age before he even got going, really. You couldn't use it to comfort his wife, who swore her husband was murdered at the behest of a powerful gambling syndicate.

Whatever the cause, Pancho Villa's heart stopped beating on July 14, 1925 as he was being prepared for surgery on his jaw and throat following a points loss to the great Irishman Jimmy McLarnin. His manager said Villa had been told not to fight McLarnin because of an infected tooth, but Villa went ahead with it anyway, jaw swollen and puffy before McLarnin ever laid a glove on it.

Maybe it would have been more fitting if Villa had gone out in a fiery car crash or in an explosion or earthquake. He fought like a force of nature, all aggression, fury, and whirling fists. About his 11-round knockout of Johnny Buff for the American flyweight title, *The New York Times* observed: "Villa was like a beast of the jungle suddenly unleashed on his prey … the little Filipino flyweight was on Buff in a jiffy, battering the defending champion around the ring and gradually wearing Buff down to a state of utter helplessness."

He was no less relentless and effective against the great Wilde, who told reporters months after Villa beat him for the title that not only did he have no recollection of being knocked out, he had no memory of anything that happened until, one day three weeks later, he found himself "in a little seaside bungalow some distance from New York." That's what it was like to fight Pancho Villa, even for the few that beat him—namely Frankie Genaro, whose second points win over Villa was so controversial it compelled editor Nat Fleischer to pen a column in the April 1923 issue of THE RING that called for the elimination of judges altogether. Francisco Guilledo—by any name you wish to remember him—was something else.



LEGENDARY TRAILBLAZER
Villa was the Philippines' first world champion and first Hall of Famer.

3. CEFERINO GARCIA

81-26-9 (57) • Middleweight Champion 1939-'40

Garcia would be the first to tell you that history frequently is unkind. Outside the Philippines, only the hardcore boxing junkies remember him anymore, and, even then, it's just as the guy who prevented Henry Armstrong from adding the middleweight title to his burgeoning resume. (At least, the middleweight title as recognized by California and the powerful New York State Athletic Commission. Al Hostak was recognized everywhere else as the 160-pound champion.)

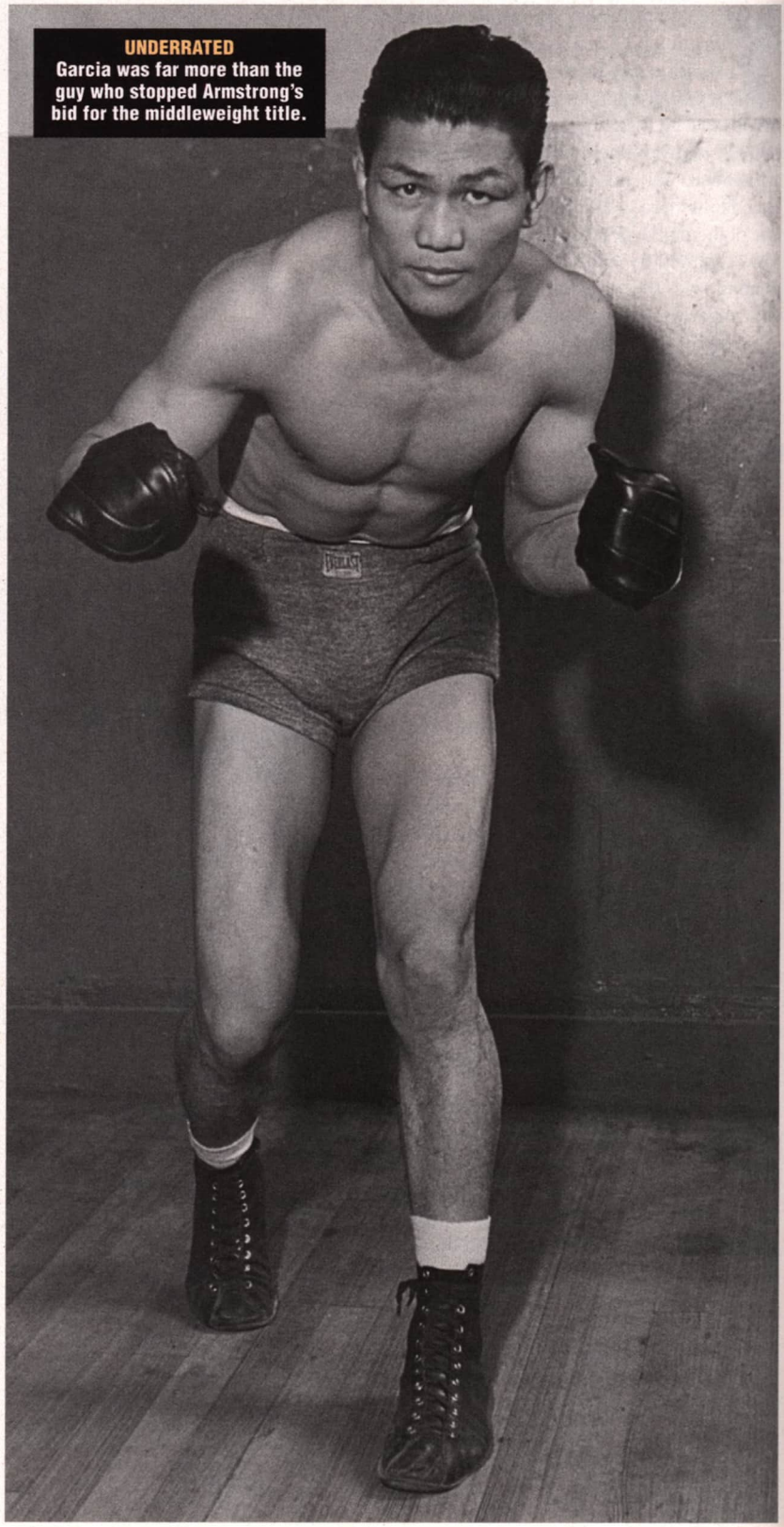
Armstrong had already won the featherweight, lightweight, and welterweight titles when he and Garcia battled to a bloody draw in Los Angeles on March 1, 1940. Romantics masquerading as historians will tell you Armstrong was robbed, that referee George Blake, who had the sole vote, had it in for Armstrong, and the story is so much better that way, isn't it? Especially when you throw in the nugget that it was the final assignment of Blake's career. There's one problem—a lot of clear-eyed observers in 1940 saw it the same way Blake did: too close to call.

"Many ringsiders thought Garcia earned (the win) with his clean, shocking uppercuts to the head that twice had the negro lad reeling backwards," the Associated Press reported the following day. "Just as many gave the fight to Armstrong for his usual, relentless, ever-punching aggressiveness."

Los Angeles writer Buddy Leitch wrote, "My card shows Armstrong winning five rounds and the defending champion taking four (with one even). It was that close." And later, "Garcia, in the closing rounds, appeared to solve Armstrong's peculiar style of defense and, from the seventh heat on, scored his most effective punches from long range."

Either way, Garcia's draw with Armstrong was but one fight of 116 when it was all over, and no man should be judged on the basis of a single night, even if on that night he gave one of history's great fighters hell. Garcia also fought Billy Soose, Ken Overlin, Fred Apostoli, and Barney Ross and twice beat Lloyd Marshall. He fought eight times in Madison Square Garden when that was the center of the world for prizefighting, when you had to be something special to be a Garden fighter.

It wasn't a bad way for a kid out of Naval, Biliran, to make a living, even if after it was all over, you are remembered mostly as a kind of spoiler. Ceferino Garcia was more than that. His wasn't a Golden Age of middleweights, but it was close to it. There weren't many better or tougher than he. That's the way he should be remembered.



UNDERRATED
Garcia was far more than the guy who stopped Armstrong's bid for the middleweight title.

4. LUISITO ESPINOSA

47-13 (26) • WBA Bantamweight Titleholder 1989-'91 • WBC Featherweight Titleholder 1995-'99

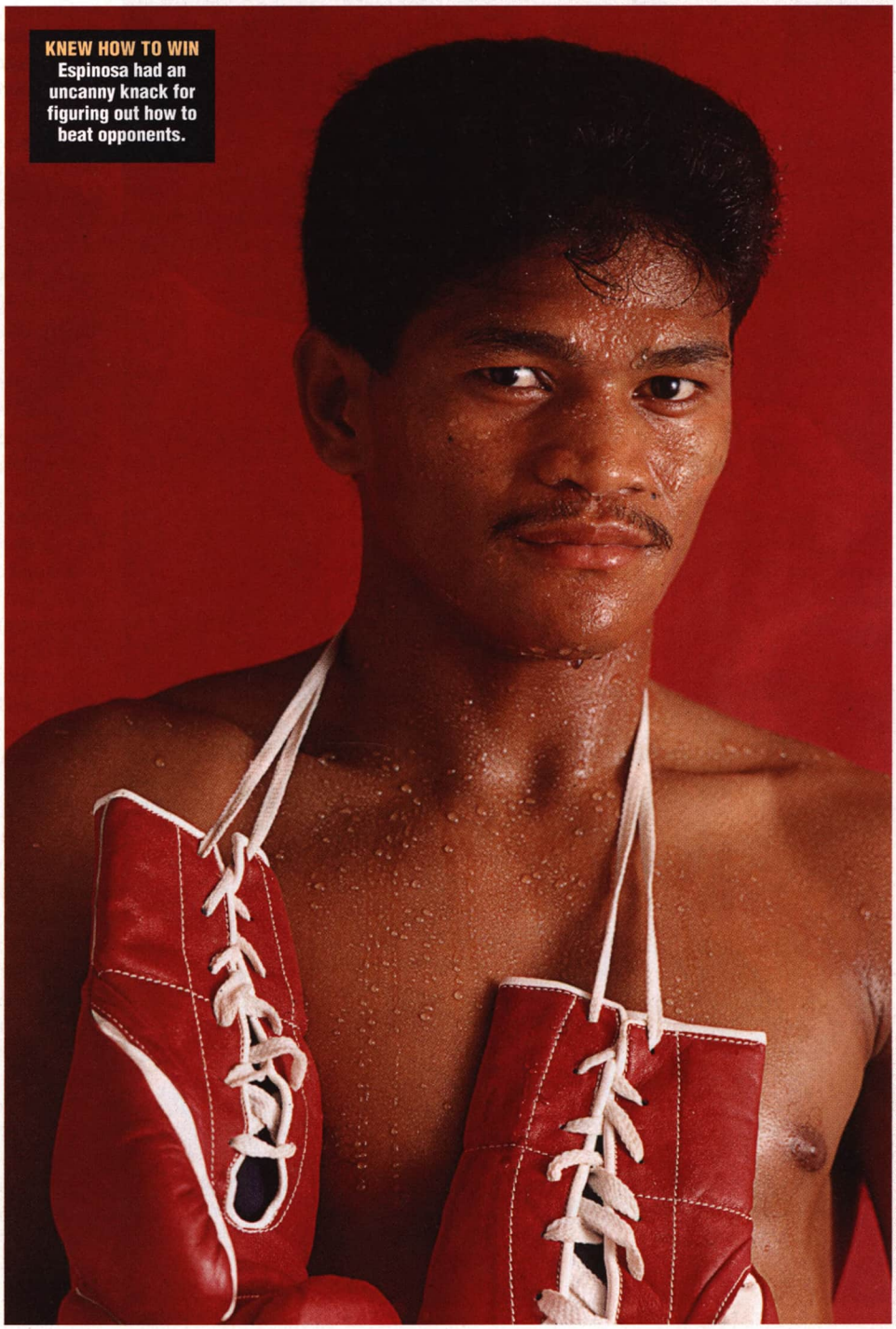
There are guys on the pages before this one and after it who hit harder than Luisito Espinosa and who were faster, better schooled, or more charismatic. Most of them were more fun to watch, but not one of them was better at adapting to the man in front of him and figuring out a way to beat him. Espinosa did it time after time after time.

Long after his best days had come and gone, Espinosa squeaked by a young, scrappy Juan Carlos Ramirez using his wits and not much else. He threw knuckleballs at the kid all night, stalled, and was damn lucky his eyebrow opened when it did so they had to go to the cards. He looked done. Three months later, he blew out Kennedy McKinney in two rounds, right after McKinney had destroyed Junior Jones. That was Espinosa.

The Filipinos love Espinosa now. They loved him when he was winning; 30,000 strong would come out to see him fight in Manila when he was on top, but, when he lost, it was a different story. At least, that's the way he saw it. After Alejandro Gonzalez stopped him in two rounds in 1993, Espinosa took his act to Tokyo and didn't return until 1996, after he had met Gonzalez again and knocked him out in four. "In the Philippines, they look down on you when you are defeated. They forget the victories and only think of you as a loser," Espinosa told THE RING in 1998.

He didn't give them too much to complain about. Sure, he lost to a bunch of guys early in his career that no one ever heard from again, but what Filipino great didn't? By the time the painful end came in 2005, he'd defended the WBC featherweight title eight times and twice defended the WBA bantamweight title he'd won by stopping the feared Khaokor Galaxy in less than a round.

Espinosa never got the one fight he wanted most, against Naseem Hamed, the featherweight darling of the 1990s. That's the one that would have put him over the top. The promise of that kind of money is what keeps guys like Espinosa in the game for 20 years. "I'd love to fight Hamed. He's unorthodox, so I'd have to study his style a lot beforehand and decide what I would do," he said after stopping McKinney. Espinosa wasn't as fast as Hamed was or as charismatic or explosive. He didn't have Hamed's connections or flair. He wasn't as much fun. And he just might have pulled it off.



KNEW HOW TO WIN
Espinosa had an uncanny knack for figuring out how to beat opponents.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

5. GERRY PENALOSA

55-8-2 (37) • WBC Junior Bantamweight Titleholder 1997-'98

HATED TO LOSE
Penalosa enjoyed a long and successful career.

It would have been entirely fitting if the last time any of us saw Gerry Penalosa in a prize ring was when he absolutely refused to stop charging headlong into the best bombs young, power-punching Juan Manuel Lopez could throw at him.

On second thought, considering how many dubious decisions Penalosa lost over the course of a 21-year career, maybe his next fight, where he was more or less jobbed against Eric Morel, would have been more appropriate.

Either way, Penalosa's last fight was a four-round win over one Yodsaenkeng Kietmangmee in Zamboanga City, payment for which Penalosa donated to Z Gorres, the young Filipino fighter who suffered a career-ending brain injury in a fight in Las Vegas. Really, that's probably the most fitting ending of all the choices, given Penalosa's reputation as a man of strong character.

And there are worse ways to go out than that. Penalosa's is one of the happier exits you'll find on these pages, even if the size of his talent never quite equaled the breadth of his heart, courage, and desire. Don't get us wrong; Penalosa possessed a technical acumen probably superior to anyone on these pages, but guys who know the moves and can execute them, are, if not a dime a dozen, then at least less plentiful than those who combine smarts with a cast iron chin and a will made of the same stuff.

It wasn't Penalosa's skill so much that got him the WBC junior bantamweight title against Hiroshi Kawashima in 1997 or just his talent that got him through three title defenses. It wasn't just his footwork or counterpunching that so troubled In-Joo Cho twice, Masamori Tokuyama twice, and Daniel Ponce DeLeon—and those were just the guys he lost to, all closely and/or controversially to one degree or another.

Ask Jhonny Gonzalez what it was about Gerry Penalosa. Ask Ratanachai Singwancha. It was those things, yes, the movement and the precision punching, but it was also a constitution that is uncommon among all men, forget about prizefighters. Gerry Penalosa hated to lose.

"It's about time for me to leave boxing. I think this is the best time for me to spend more time with my family," Penalosa said after stopping Kietmangmee. You've got to admire a man who goes out on his own terms like that. When you look at what the guy has done over the course of his career, you realize that was the only way it could end. It was the only way he would allow it to end.

6. LITTLE DADO

46-7-9 (21) • Flyweight 1936-'43

How's this for a statistic? The seven losses on the record of Little Dado—real name Eleuterio Zapanta, but we think you'll agree that "Little Dado" is much more fun—came against two fighters. A long-forgotten flyweight named Little Pancho beat Dado four straight times in four months in Dado's first year as a prizefighter; and David Kui Kong Young whipped him three times in three tries over the last two years of Dado's career. (Maybe it was Little Pancho in disguise.) In between? Lots of draws, nine to be exact. And the rest? All wins. Dado went undefeated from June 1937 to February 1941. That doesn't happen by accident. This little guy could fight.

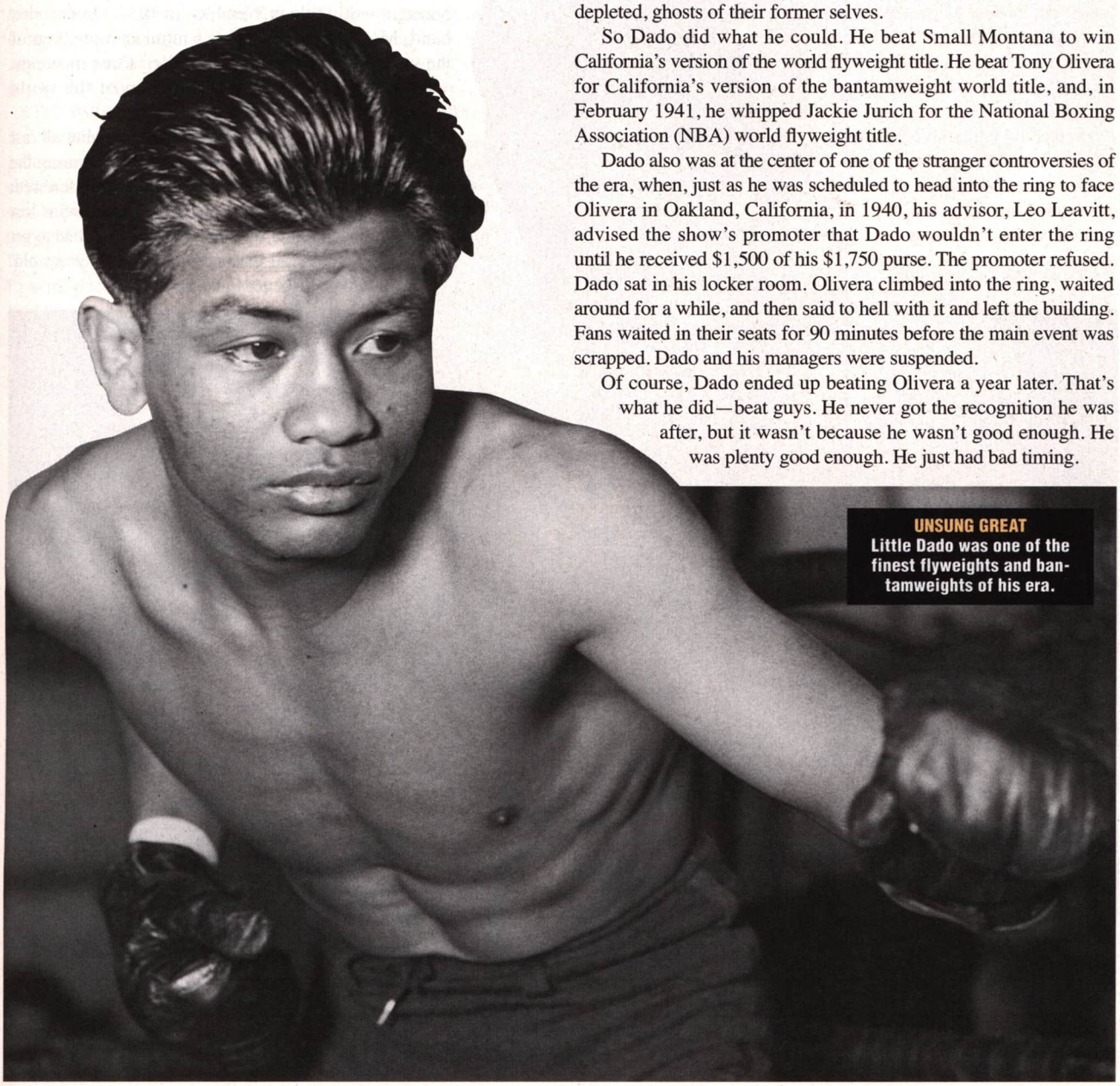
It was an accident of timing that Dado was never universally recognized as a world champion at either flyweight or bantamweight. It was his bad luck that he fought during one of those periods when the fight game couldn't get out of its own way and titles were vacant or fractured a lot of the time (kind of like it is now). But if you want consistency, know that for five years THE RING rated him among the top five flyweights in the world.

Also, the later part of Dado's career was fought during the war years, when many titles were frozen and the National Boxing Association was doing what organizing bodies do: holding tournaments, naming champions where it could until the war ended, and all the heroes who went in young and strong came out old and depleted, ghosts of their former selves.

So Dado did what he could. He beat Small Montana to win California's version of the world flyweight title. He beat Tony Olivera for California's version of the bantamweight world title, and, in February 1941, he whipped Jackie Jurich for the National Boxing Association (NBA) world flyweight title.

Dado also was at the center of one of the stranger controversies of the era, when, just as he was scheduled to head into the ring to face Olivera in Oakland, California, in 1940, his advisor, Leo Leavitt, advised the show's promoter that Dado wouldn't enter the ring until he received $1,500 of his $1,750 purse. The promoter refused. Dado sat in his locker room. Olivera climbed into the ring, waited around for a while, and then said to hell with it and left the building. Fans waited in their seats for 90 minutes before the main event was scrapped. Dado and his managers were suspended.

Of course, Dado ended up beating Olivera a year later. That's what he did—beat guys. He never got the recognition he was after, but it wasn't because he wasn't good enough. He was plenty good enough. He just had bad timing.



UNSUNG GREAT
Little Dado was one of the finest flyweights and bantamweights of his era.

7. SMALL MONTANA

80-22-9 (10) • Flyweight 1931-'42

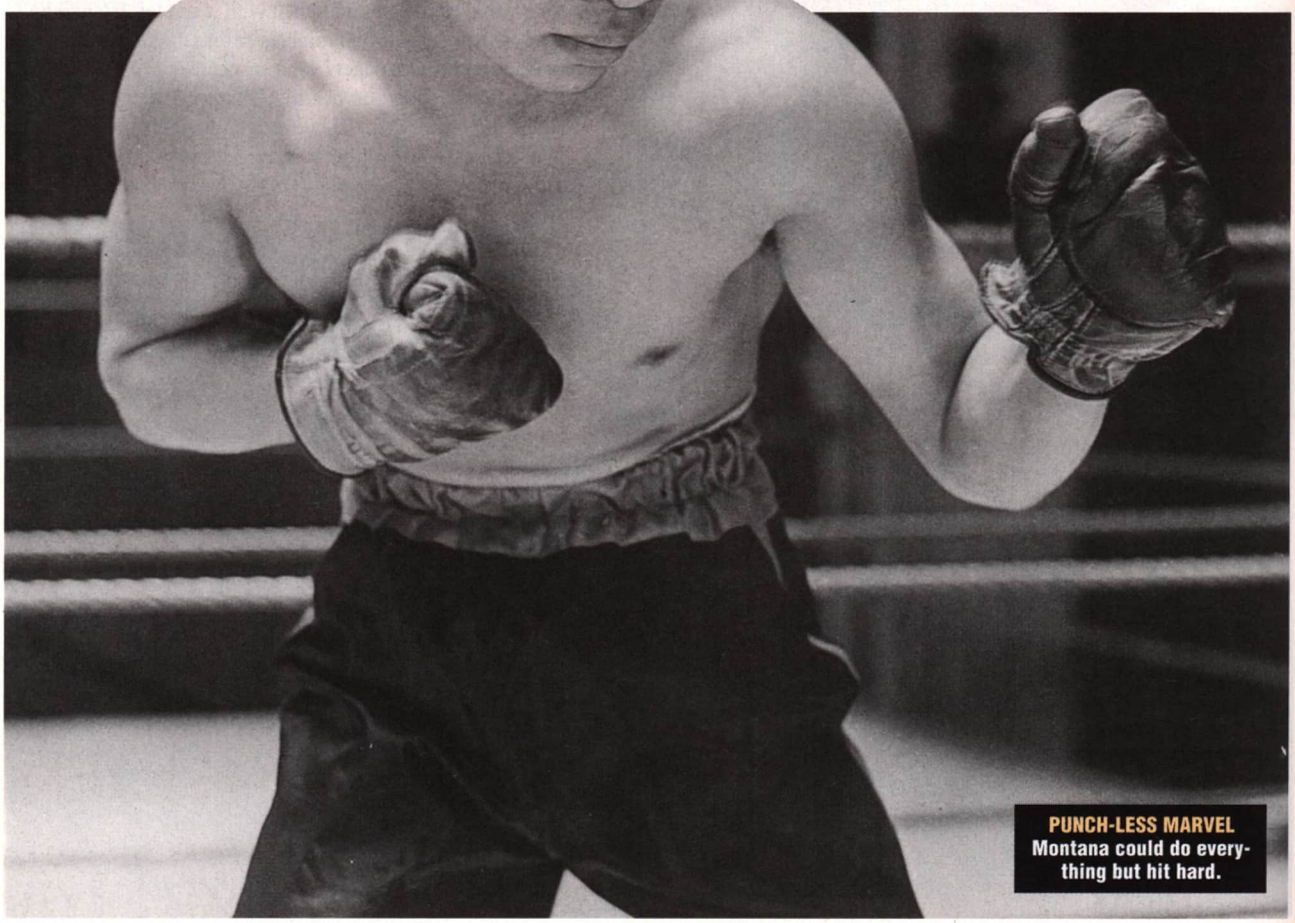
These nicknames just keep getting better. Montana—real name Benjamin Gan—is a wonderful example of a fighter with virtually no punching power who managed nonetheless to become a top-notch, world-class fighter. Montana and guys like him are the unappreciated geniuses of boxing because they have to work twice as hard and be twice as good as a guy who can't fight but was born with anvils for fists.

And, they get booed more than punchers because a lot of dopes think that unless they can see a guy's brain stem coming loose it's not a fight. Well, Montana never knocked anyone's brain stem loose, but he beat Midget Wolgast, Tony Marino, Manuel Ortiz, and a hell of a lot of other flyweights who hit harder than he did. Hell, all of them did.

You could fault him for choosing Small Montana as a nickname, since it translates to "little mountain" and he was 5'4", 112 pounds, which is no one's idea of a mountain, small or otherwise. But the little guy was all fighter. The son of a local police chief, he ran away from home at 17 years old to become a fighter, and faster than you could say "dwarf," he reeled off 25-straight wins—in two years! Give him credit for this too: He never went anywhere without a snapshot of his idol, Pancho Villa—AKA Francisco Guilledo—in his wallet. That's a fighter.

As good as he was, there were guys Montana couldn't do a thing against. One of them was Lou Salica, who beat him twice. In their match for Salica's bantamweight title in 1940, Salica's bodypunches sent Montana down nine times before the fight was stopped in the third round. Benny Lynch was Montana's better too. He beat Montana to unify the flyweight world title in Wembley in 1937. On the other hand, Montana had Wolgast's number most days of the week, besting him in two of their three meetings, one of them for New York's version of the world flyweight title.

By the early 1940s, Montana found out what all fast guys find out when they get older: Speed is among the first things to go, and, if you can't punch, you're screwed. The guy who started his career with 25 straight wins lost nine of his last dozen fights, a couple by kayo, and had to get out of the business, all washed up at just 29 years old. Sometimes it's better to be a puncher.



PUNCH-LESS MARVEL
Montana could do everything but hit hard.

8. ERBITO SALAVARRIA

39-11-3 (11) • WBC Flyweight Titleholder 1970-'71 • WBC Flyweight Titleholder 1975-'76

Just when you thought the Philippines had produced all the noteworthy flyweights one country could possibly produce, we come to the wonderful Salavarria, who enjoys—or maybe suffers—the distinction of being one of the few in this collection to have gone through his entire career without a quaint and colorful nickname attached to his biography. Good for him. He also holds the distinction of being the only fighter on this list to be stripped of his title because of allegations that he spiked his water with amphetamines during a bout.

If that sounds strange, consider this: In the moments immediately following Salavarria's 1971 draw against Betulio Gonzalez in Maracaibo, Venezuela, Gonzalez' hometown, the president of the local boxing commission, one Ramon Barrios, strode to the center of the ring and announced that Salavarria's water had sugar in it, which is a profoundly grave offense, particularly when you beat a guy in his hometown—in Venezuela.

The WBC, which was only slightly less reprehensible than it is now, mainly due to its lesser influence, later claimed to have evidence that Salavarria's water was laced with amphetamines—or sugar, whatever—and promptly stripped him of the title. (THE RING magazine, to its considerable credit, saw the farce for what it was and continued to recognize Salavarria as the flyweight champion.) It was one of the more interesting and blatantly dirty cons of the era and should have told us what to expect down the road from our so-called sanctioning bodies. But we digress.

That wasn't even the last time Salavarria was screwed against a Mexican fighter. *The Los Angeles Times'* Jack Hawn described Salavarria's May 1975 non-title loss to Alberto Morales this way: "In the seventh, the sharp-shooting, quick-footed Salavarria fired a chopping right to the side of his opponent's head, and Morales hit the canvas ... and never won a round thereafter," and noted that on his card Salavarria won seven rounds to Morales' three.

Still, Salavarria had many more highlights than lowlights, such as when he broke both hands and still won a 15-round split decision over Susumu Hanagata in a 1975 title fight. More: stopping the excellent Chartchai Chionoi in two rounds to win the WBC flyweight belt in 1970 and winning the WBA title in one of three wins over Hanagata.

You can argue that though he twice won alphabet titles, Salavarria never recorded a successful defense. It's true. And he dropped three of his last four fights, two by knockout, but he had a pretty good 15-year run and didn't disgrace himself, his family, or the people of the Philippines. And he did all of it without a nickname.

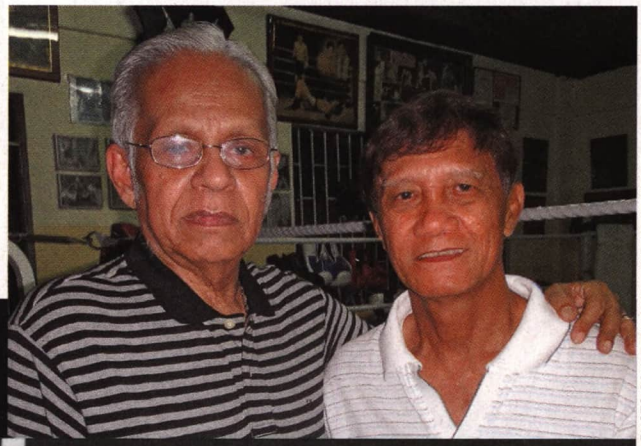
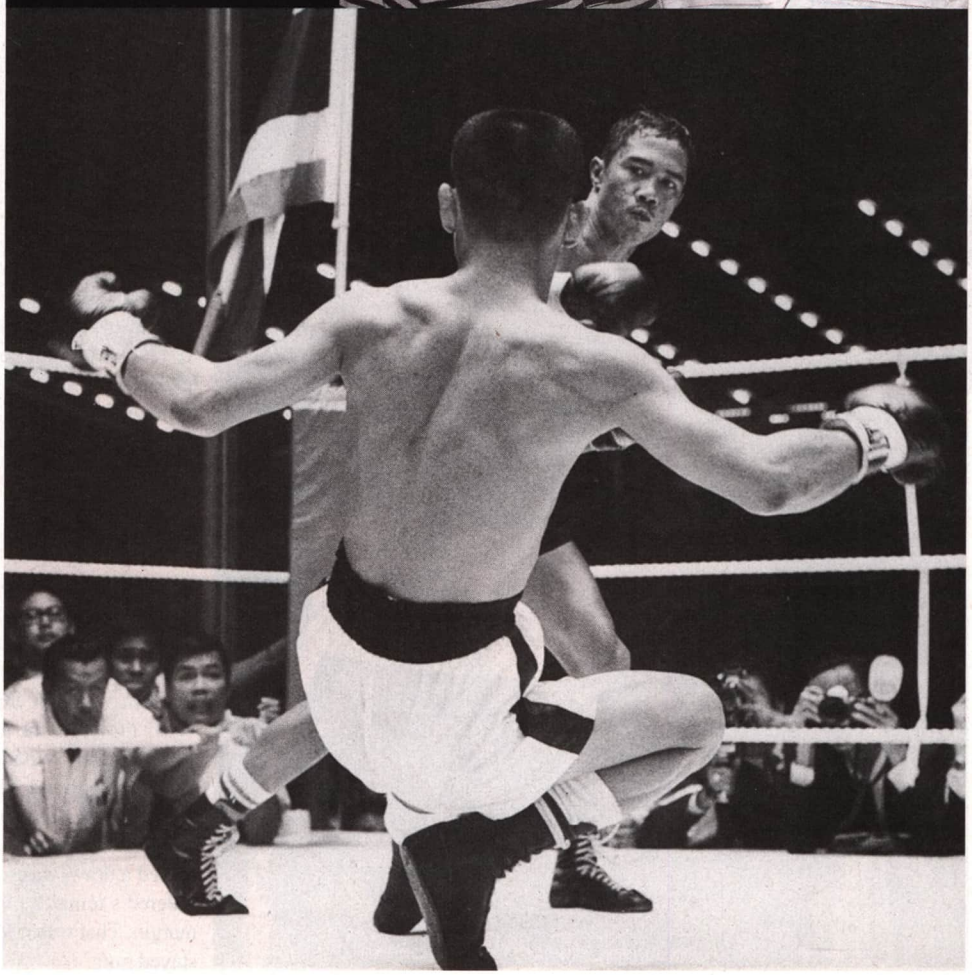


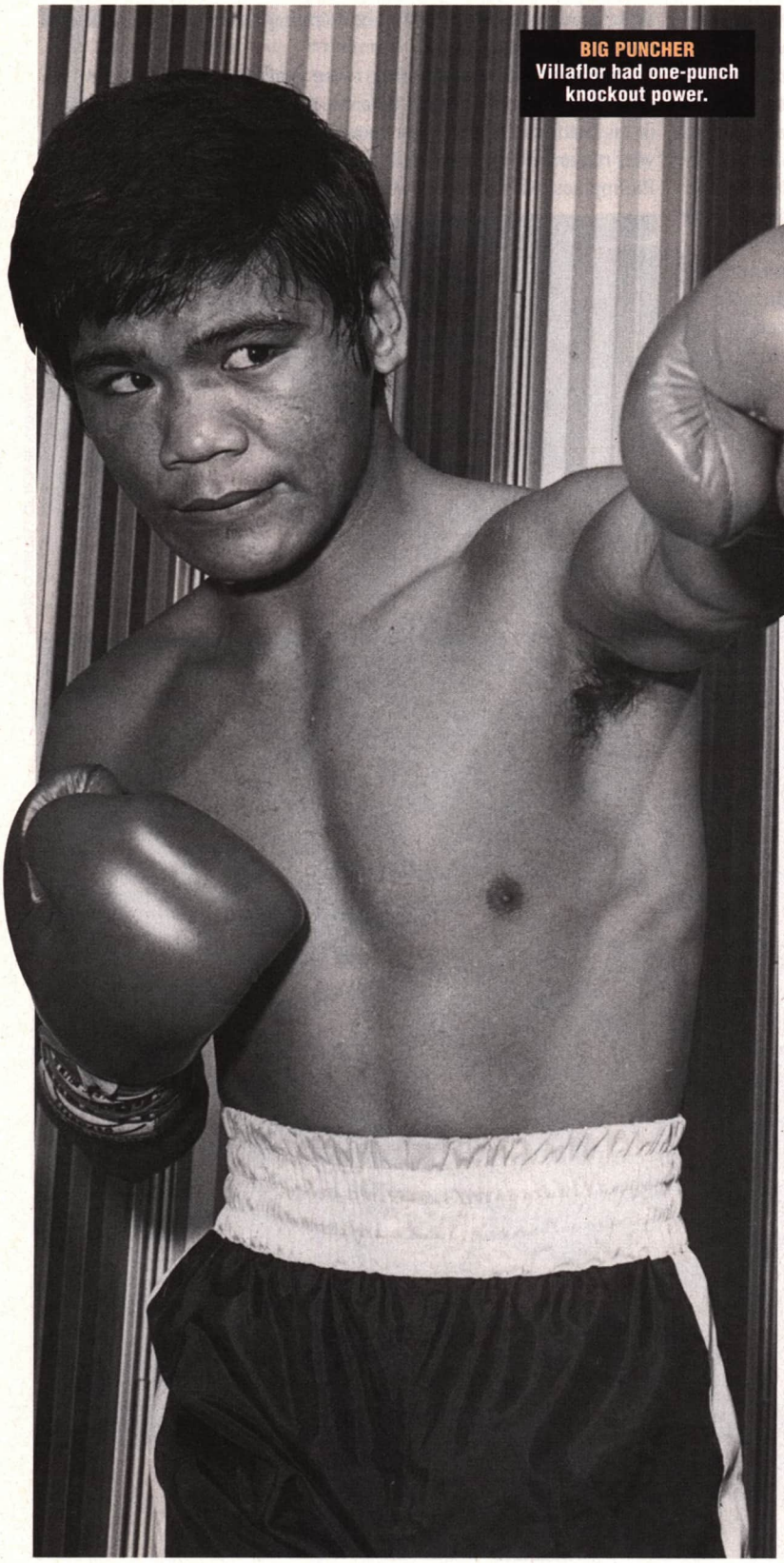
PHOTO COURTESY OF RONNIE NATHANIELSZ

THEN AND NOW
Salavarria knocks out Chartchai Chionio to win the WBC belt in 1970 (bottom) and posed with Ronnie Nathanielsz in 2011 (top).



9. BEN VILLAFLOR

53-7-6 (31) • WBA Junior Lightweight Titleholder 1972-'73, '73-'76



BIG PUNCHER
Villaflor had one-punch knockout power.

Though by most standards the majority of fighters are still young men when they fight for the last time, Villaflor was just a baby at 23 years old when he quit the game after losing the WBA junior lightweight title to slippery Sammy Serrano in Puerto Rico in October 1976. That puts him in exclusive company on this list, especially when you factor in that he never attempted a comeback. Of course, his early retirement makes more sense when you discover that he started fighting as a pro in 1966—*at age 13!*

This sets him apart, too, among the names in this compilation: The kid could crack. If you haven't noticed, Manny Pacquiao aside, tiny Filipino fighters aren't known for being punchers, but Villaflor, a southpaw, had a punishing straight left and a clubbing right. He used both on all manner of unsuspecting junior lightweights over a 10-year career that spanned the late 1960s to the late '70s.

Included among the vanquished was Alfredo Mercano, who Villaflor, at just 19 years old, beat over 15 rounds for the WBA junior lightweight title in 1972. The boxing press was startled at the teenager's maturity. *The Los Angeles Times* reported, "Villaflor, fighting like a veteran despite his youth, outpunched and outboxed the 25-year-old champion and won by a wide margin."

Not all of Villaflor's wins came as easily. In a September 1972 defense in Honolulu against tough Victor Echegaray, Villaflor had to dig deep to escape with a draw. "The 19-year-old Filipino champion, his left eye swollen shut since the sixth round, summoned up all the stamina in his body to send Echegaray to the canvas twice in the 13th round," observed the Associated Press.

Interestingly, Villaflor suffered the majority of his losses early in his career: five of his seven career defeats came before he ever fought outside the Philippines. He moved to Honolulu in 1970, and that helped. He won 18 straight before losing a decision and the title to Kuniaki Shubata of Tokyo. Shubata was no stiff; he had won the WBC title from the great Vicente Saldivar in 1970. In a 1973 rematch, Villaflor starched Shubata for the title in the opening round. That's the kind of puncher he was.

His punch didn't help him against Serrano, who made a career of making punchers look bad. Their first fight, scored a draw, was so clearly an injustice that the WBA ordered a rematch, which Serrano won by an enormous margin. That was it for Villaflor, who got out young and stayed out.

10. ROLANDO NAVARETTE

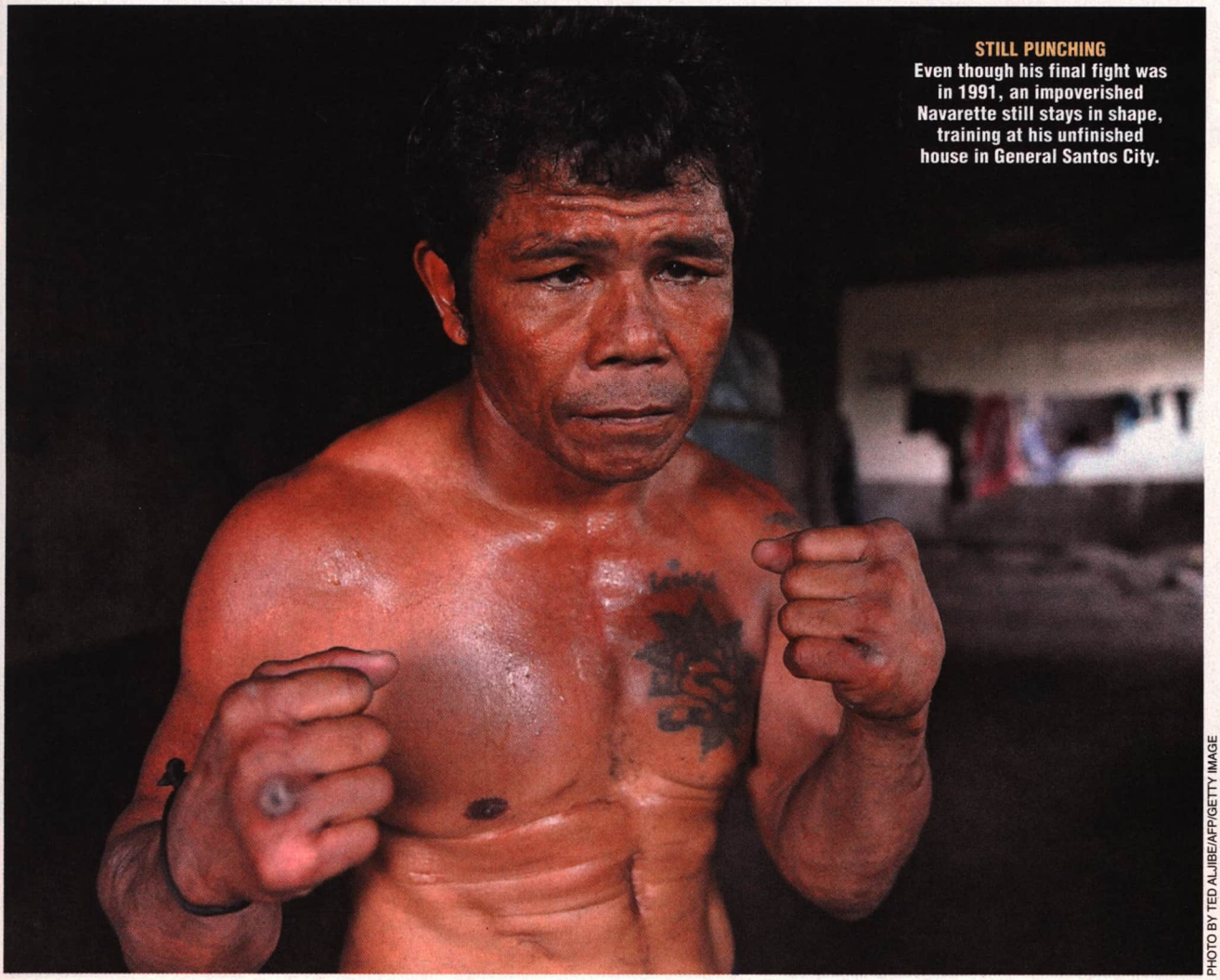
54-15-3 (31) • WBC Junior Lightweight Title Holder 1981-'82

Rolando Navarette was no Fancy Dan and no chameleon. He didn't come to outbox you, to adapt to you, or to shake your hand before every round. He came to wear you down, wear you down, and beat on you until you fell or the judges had no choice but to recognize that he was the less civilized man. That's what he did. If you hung around and let him bang on you for 10 or 15 rounds, you knew it the next day and a few days after that too. It didn't help him that he swallowed up punches like they were so many M&Ms.

Against the very best, he was impotent. The great Alexis Arguello destroyed him in Navarette's first title fight—his reward for going on a 13-0-1 run that spanned just less than two years. But there's no shame in that. Bazooka Limon, a sort of kindred spirit, stopped him in 1982, relieving him of the WBC junior lightweight title Navarette had won by blasting out the charming and utterly defenseless Cornelius Boza-Edwards—on short notice, no less. Navarette took his revenge a long and bloody six years later, when neither of them were any good anymore, for all the wars they had been through. Still, it was revenge all the same, which is always good.

Navarette had had a decent run by then; he had even squeezed in a title defense against Chung II Choi before Limon relieved him of the belt, and there are worse things that could happen. Fighters by the thousands never came close to a world title shot and would have been happy enough with what Navarette accomplished, with the cheers he got at home and the love the Filipinos gave him, which was considerable. But you knew that wasn't him and that there would be trouble when he got out there. And there was. He went through every penny he ever made in the ring, and after being convicted of rape in Hawaii, did four years in prison.

When he got out, he returned to the Philippines, where his problems with drinking, women, money, and the streets were harder to hide from, and there have been arrests and injuries and squalor. The fans still love him there, call him champ, and slip him a little cash if they can spare it. He passes his days hitting a homemade heavy bag in his unfinished house, and he still does it like he's trying to prove he's the less civilized man. He succeeds.



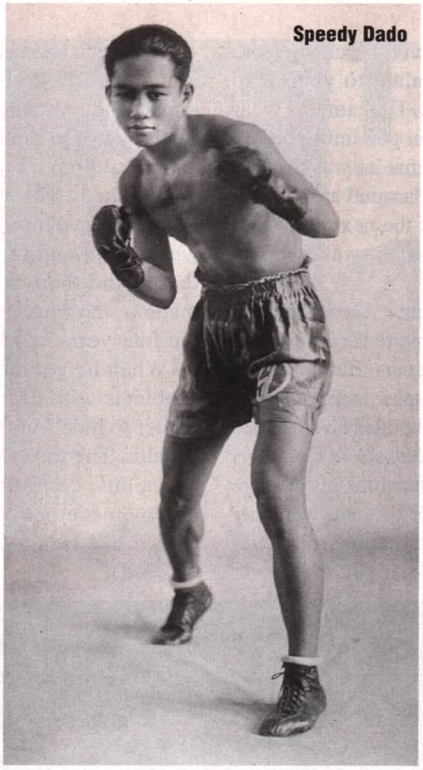
STILL PUNCHING
Even though his final fight was in 1991, an impoverished Navarette still stays in shape, training at his unfinished house in General Santos City.

PHOTO BY TED ALJIBE/AFP/GETTY IMAGE

HONORABLE MENTION

Not everyone makes it into the top 10. If they did, it wouldn't be much of a top 10 now, would it? These guys, presented in no particular order, did enough solid work to get their names here. Good for them.

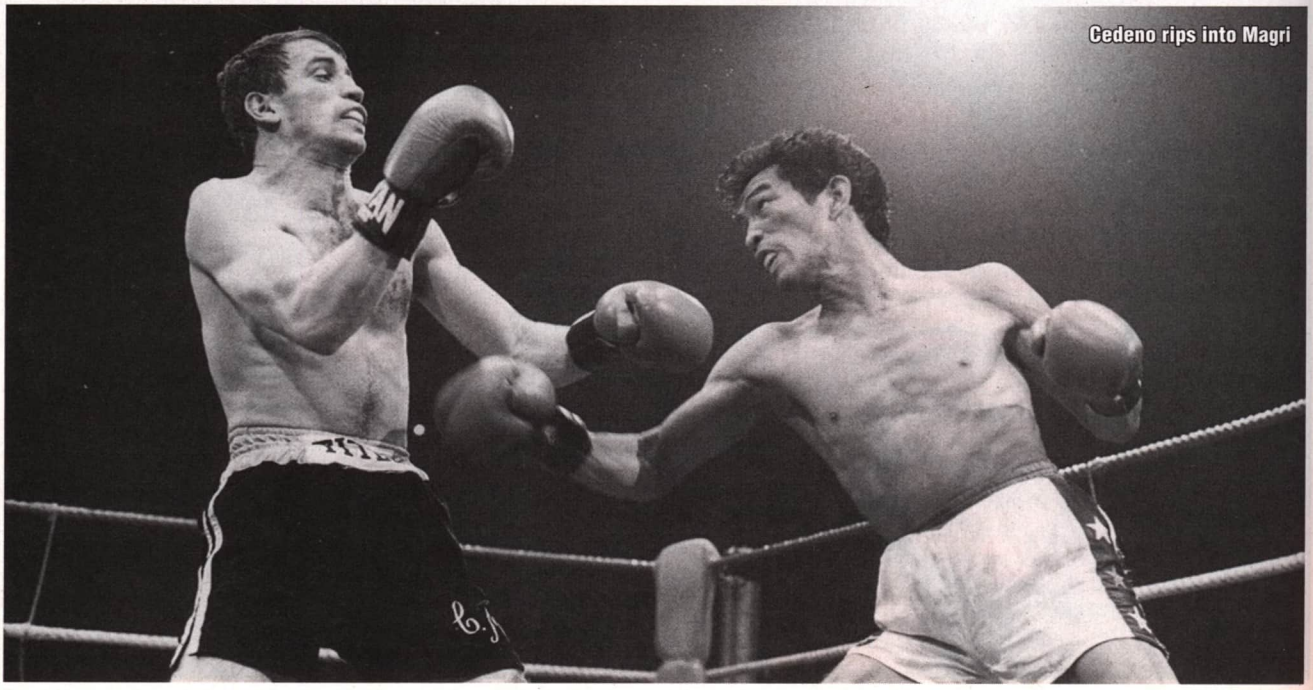
Any day you read a list that twice has the word "Dado" in it is a good day. **Speedy Dado**—real name Diosdado Posadas—wasn't quite as accomplished as the better-known "Little," but wins over Lou Salica and Panama Al Brown get him here, as does a draw with Midget Wolgast … What does it mean when you fight in the other guy's country and get a draw? Ask **Rene Barrientos**, who drew with Hiroshi Kobayashi in Tokyo in a 1968 bout. No matter. He outpointed Ruben Navarro for the vacant WBC junior lightweight title a year later … Maybe you already knew that Nonito Donaire's trainer, **Dodie Boy Penalosa,** is Gerry Penalosa's older brother. Did you also know that he was the first IBF light flyweight titleholder and later won the same version of the flyweight belt? … Poor **Tacy Macalos** lost almost half his fights, but eight of his 12 career losses came in his last 12 bouts. Before that, he had a one-fight reign as IBF light flyweight titleholder … If you haven't noticed, the Philippines crank out flyweights and light flyweights like no one's business. Add to the list **Bernabe Villacampo,** who ended his career in 1979 with 22 losses, but,



Speedy Dado

along the way he won the WBA flyweight title in 1969 … **Bobby Berna** won the vacant IBF junior featherweight title against Sung In-Suh in 1983 and immediately lost it to him in the return. That's still more than you'll get done this year … And the award for the streakiest Filipino fighter ever goes to late-1980s and early '90s light flyweight **Rolando Pascua**, who started his career with 14 consecutive wins and ended it dropping 12 of his last 16. Along the way, he knocked out future Hall of Famer Humberto Gonzalez to win the WBC light flyweight title … We're as surprised as you are to see a "Frank" here, but here he is anyway. **Frank Cedeno** (or Franklin Sedenio, if that works better for you) stopped Charlie Magri for the WBC flyweight title in 1983 in Magri's own backyard of London … At 140 pounds, a giant among Filipino fighters, **Pedro Adigue** won the vacant WBC junior welterweight title with a decision over Adolph Pruitt in 1968 … **Young Tommy** fought about every bantamweight that walked the earth in the 1930s, including Newsboy Brown, Midget Wolgast, Baby Arizmendi, and Speedy Dado, most of them several times … You remember **Jesus Salud**—big puncher who fought out of Hawaii but was born in Sinait, knocked a lot of guys stiff but lost to Welcome Ncita, Kennedy McKinney, Kevin Kelley, and other top guys … **Rolando Bohol** sneaks in on the basis of his 1988 win over Chang-Ho Choi for the IBF flyweight title and the defense against Cho-Woon Park. ■

A special thank you to Philippines journalist Ronnie Nathanielsz for his help with this article.



Cedeno rips into Magri

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A LEGENDARY SECOND ACT

Bernard Hopkins Continues To Shape His Own Destiny

By Paul Salgado

Who knows if Bernard Hopkins has ever read F. Scott Fitzgerald, but, if he has, it is certain he bristled at the literary legends famously errant observation: "There are no second acts in American lives."

For Hopkins, a living, breathing icon, his life inside and outside the ring has always been about the second act.

It has been his way since age 17, when Hopkins was supposed to be just another disposable ghetto kid trapped in the edifice of the American penal system, locked up in Graterford Penitentiary. He found boxing, found Islam, and left behind the horrors of prison life after five years of incarceration, never looking back.

Hopkins second act was to take his reclaimed freedom and uncompromisingly shape his own destiny.

It has been a lifelong conviction that took him from a loss in his first professional fight to a 20-time defender of the middleweight championship, from a peasant-poor kid living in the Raymond Rosen projects of North Philadelphia to multimillionaire, from great fighter to a sporting legend in the aftermath of having won THE RING magazine light heavyweight championship at the once-unthinkable age of 46.

An hour after beating 28-year-old Jean Pascal of Laval, Quebec, for the championship belt, Hopkins sat before the media inside Montreal's Bell Centre and reflected on the mindset that has driven him to surmount seemingly impossible odds throughout his life:

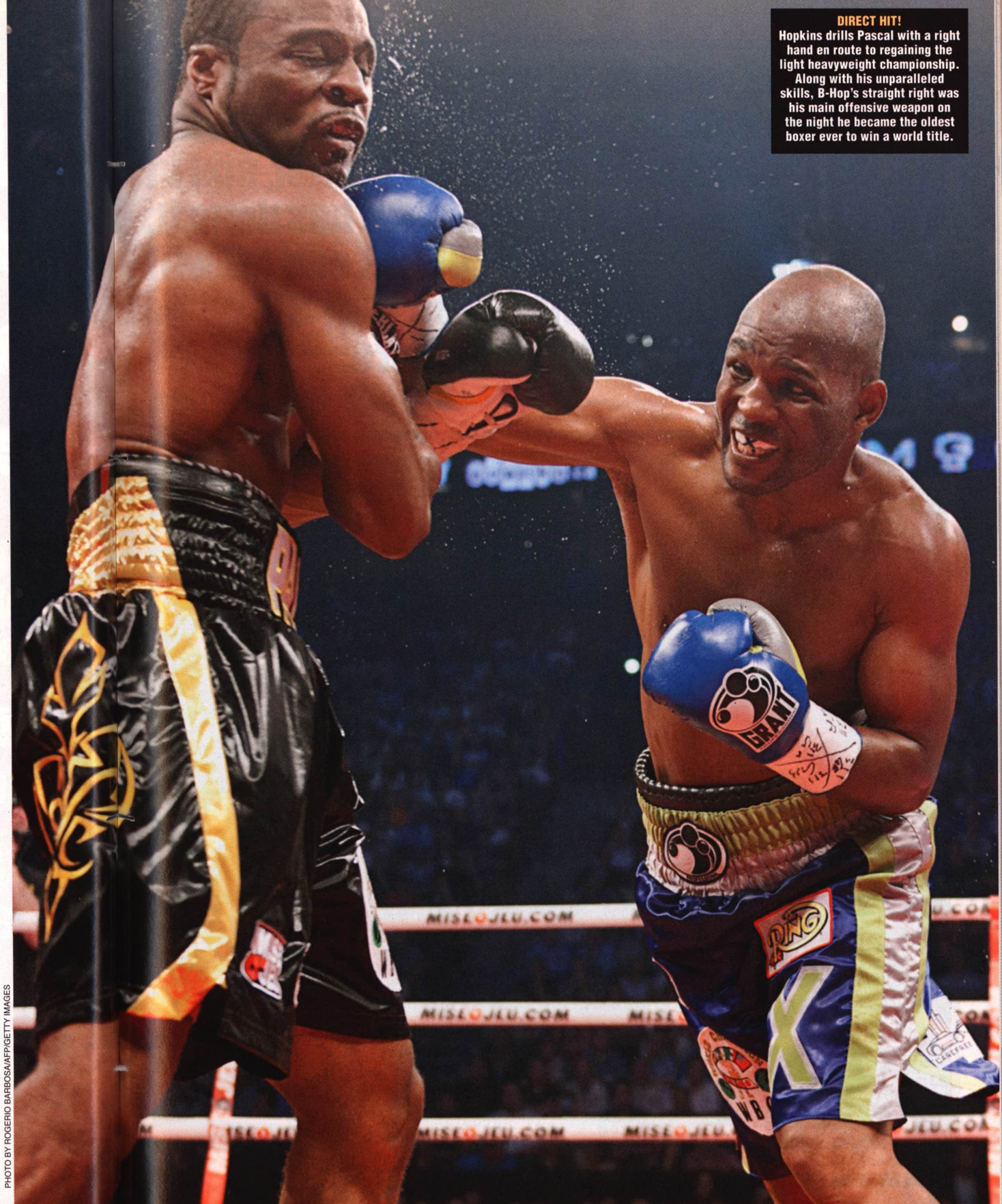
"Most people are afraid to fail, so they won't try. I am not like that. I am an overachiever. My life is overachievement. I was supposed to be dead at 18, and I was never supposed to walk off nine years of parole. And that was 20 or 30 years ago. I say that not to brag, but I say that to anybody that hears that someone should dictate their destiny. Tell them that they are a liar. Tell them you are not going to submit to what they think you should be. That is in anything, corporate America or in sports. And that is what keeps my fire burning and makes me a hard guy to beat. Trust me, in that ring, in that battle, when you are a little tired, when you get hit and your eyes are swollen, and you have to dig down deep, that is what makes you great."

Greatness, however, can sometimes be fickle, and it was somewhat of a cruel irony that Russian Dennis Lebedev had unmercifully knocked a once-great-now-utterly-shot Roy Jones unconscious in faraway Moscow mere hours before Hopkins stepped into the ring to make history against Pascal. It took Hopkins 17 years to get his second act arch-nemesis Jones and reverse a loss that cost him the first try at the middleweight crown.

Lost in the glare of his spectacular victory in Montreal, it seemed forgotten that Hopkins earned his first try at Pascal's title last December in Quebec City based on his unsightly, foul-infested rematch with Jones that left many convinced he had finally gotten old. Youth was supposed to be served, and the flashy Pascal, who idolizes Jones, was meant to enjoy the rewards of boxing's perfunctory rite of passage by beating a legend depleted of skills.

Hopkins, it turned out, had other ideas, picking himself up off the canvas twice in the early rounds to outthink and outbox the explosive punching Pascal, only to be denied a narrow but deserved points victory.

Typical of Hopkins, he changed minds quickly with the astounding display.



DIRECT HIT!
Hopkins drills Pascal with a right hand en route to regaining the light heavyweight championship. Along with his unparalleled skills, B-Hop's straight right was his main offensive weapon on the night he became the oldest boxer ever to win a world title.

PHOTO BY ROGERIO BARBOSA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

"If my record goes down, you want to see it go down that way. Bernard was the better athlete, the smarter fighter, and in the better condition. Now that 46 has done it, next [someone at age] 47, 48, 49 and 50 will do it. And if somebody does it at 60, then I'll have to get back in there."

—George Foreman

PHOTOS BY HERBY WHYNE/SPORTZFRAME

This time, according to the pundits, George Foreman's record, set in November 1994 when he knocked out Michael Moorer at age 45 to win the heavyweight championship, looked poised to be broken when Hopkins rematch with Pascal was announced. Expectations were palpable in Montreal on the night of the fight, and that didn't bode well for Pascal. Contrary to Foreman's contention that Hopkins would have to score a knockout to take the title, this time Pascal would confront an even more formidable challenge in going up against both history and a legend.

Ultimately, with the exception of the early knockdowns, the rematch unfolded similarly to the first with Pascal, 174, leading early, and Hopkins, adhering to his preference for the second act, accelerating his game through the middle and later rounds.

Pascal started fast, fluidly circling his older foe then suddenly exploding with a jab or slick combination, while Hopkins, 174, commanded the center of the ring, tracking Pascal's movements with a sturdy jab and blocking or slipping away or underneath wild punches.

This time, however, Pascal's attack seemed predicated more on controlled boxing and less on overwhelming strength in the opening rounds. He scored effectively with the jab and landed the first significant body-shot of the fight late in the second.

Early in the third, a sharp left hook seemed to visibly rattle Hopkins. But seconds later, Hopkins would land a right with concussive force, instantly changing the complexion of the fight. A follow-up three-punch combination had Pascal backing up, a thudding jab followed, and Pascal quickly searched for the clinch.

As the exchanges continued to the end of the round, Pascal's visage had discernibly changed from steely arrogance to wide-eyed uncertainty.

Hopkins later noted Pascal is an emotional fighter who can be gotten-to psychologically during a fight, which was part of his strategy. After backing Pascal up with sharp punches in round four, he mockingly stuck his tongue out at his younger adversary. The affront served to ignite Pascal, who instantly mounted a wild, multi-punch attack. Hopkins controlled most of the round, but a sweeping right followed by a jarring left hook shook him for a second time seconds before the bell, rendering it a virtual tossup.

By the mid-rounds Hopkins would utilize clever jabs, sneaky leads, and astute defense to undermine Pascal's whistling power shots. This time, however, he neglected to mount a meaningful body attack as he did in the first bout.

Pascal would prove effective when punching in combinations, but, with each explosive burst, Hopkins was right there to respond in kind.

MASTER AT WORK
Hopkins utilized his left jab to score points and set up his right hand (left), two of which preceded trips to the canvas by Pascal in the ninth and 10th rounds (below), but both were ruled slips by referee Ian John-Lewis.

By far, the fight's most memorable moment came before the seventh. Psychologically baiting Pascal once more, Hopkins dropped to the canvas and dashed off five pushups as the young champion stalled to have his glove taped. It was vintage Hopkins, who not only won the round before it started; he won the 17,560 fans at the Bell Centre (setting a new indoor record for Montreal) for the rest of the night.

HEAD GAMES
Middle-aged marvel Hopkins delights the crowd—and probably blows Pascal's mind—by dropping to the canvas and knocking off five pushups while waiting for Pascal to come out for the seventh round.

PHOTO BY HERBY WHYNE/SPORTZFRAME

PHOTO BY HERBY WHYNE/SPORTZFRAME

LATE CHARGE

Pascal launched a determined attack in the 12th and final round in a desperate bid to retain the title. Although he rocked Hopkins, he couldn't put him down, and the local favorite had to settle for going down fighting.

By far, the fight's most memorable moment came before the seventh. Psychologically baiting Pascal once more, Hopkins dropped to the canvas and dashed off five pushups as the young champion stalled to have his glove taped. It was vintage Hopkins, who not only won the round before it started; he won the 17,560 fans at the Bell Centre (setting a new indoor record for Montreal) for the rest of the night.

After conceding a free-swinging eighth, Hopkins stole rounds nine and 10 based largely on superior aggression and crisp rights. Pascal would twice touch the canvas in those rounds, his feet sliding from beneath him on a mid-ring logo, immediately after fielding punches. But referee Ian John-Lewis (UK) would call each a slip.

Hopkins utilized a rigid jab to earn the 11th. But Pascal, cognizant his title was hanging in the balance, showed a champion's pride in the 12th, hammering Hopkins into full retreat before stunning him one last time with a looping right to take the round.

At the sound of the final bell, both men raised their arms in victory, but it was clear that old man Hopkins, buoyed by the magnitude of the occasion, had turned in a stunning performance and would take it on the cards. On this night, youth would bow to sage genius.

Hopkins, now 52-5-2 (32) and 1 no-contest, had complained bitterly about the scoring in Quebec City, but, this time, the judges, all of them from neutral countries, were unanimous: Rey Donesco (Philippines) had it 116-112, Anek Hongtongkam (Thailand) scored 115-114, and Guido Cavalleri (Italy), 115-113.

Pascal, 26-2-1 (16), was magnanimous despite losing his belt, praising Hopkins for

GUESS WHO WON
It's hard to believe that the bespectacled gent with the salt-and-pepper whiskers is the new light heavyweight champion (top), but the glum look on Pascal's face makes it clear who won the fight.

PHOTOS BY HERBY WHYNE/SPORTZFRAME

his showing and simply stating he'd "learned a lot from Bernard."

"I am so amazed at how people fall into this Bernard Hopkins mind trap and look at him as super intelligent. I am not so sure he is intelligent as much as a sly fox," observed Russ Anber, host of Canada's weekly boxing show, *In this Corner*. "You know, him saying: 'I am an old man. I made history. I won the last fight.' All that crap was Hopkins doing his psych job more on the judges than Jean Pascal himself … These judges in my opinion, especially with the 116-112 score that was rendered, was someone who in his mind was already going to be part of a history-making event. That he was there to see the oldest guy in history win a world championship."

Some seasoned fight journalists lining press row saw it as a stalemate. From ringside, this writer scored 115-114, Pascal, but upon subsequently reviewing the HBO broadcast saw it 115-113 in favor of Hopkins. It was that kind of fight.

Graciously, Foreman would be the first to praise Hopkins, texting him minutes after the fight.

"If my record goes down, you want to see it go down that way," said Foreman. "Bernard was the better athlete, the smarter fighter, and in the better condition. Now that 46 has done it, next [someone at age] 47, 48, 49 and 50 will do it. And if somebody does it at 60, then I'll have to get back in there."

Ultimately, Hopkins did not leave his opponent supine on the canvas as Foreman did Moorer, nor did he end it with a single crushing left hook the way a 38-year-old Jersey Joe Walcott did against Ezzard Charles to win the heavyweight crown. Albeit a slightly less convincing outcome, Hopkins, at 46, produced no less an astounding achievement.

Beyond Foreman, one would have to go back all the way to "Ruby" Bob Fitzsimmons, who took the light heavyweight belt at age 40 from George Gardner, to find the next oldest man ever to have won a linear belt. Moreover, overlooked in all the excitement is the fact that Hopkins became only the second man in history to regain THE RING light heavyweight world championship. The only other fighter to do so was Tarver, who lost and subsequently regained the belt from Glen Johnson.

Afterward, Hopkins was unequivocal about wanting several more major bouts and hinted at fighting until the age of 50. At this stage, it might be fair to say that all of Hopkins' bouts going forward will be pick-'em affairs as there is no way to determine the night his body no longer synchronizes with his genius.

Contractual obligations have him poised to face Chad Dawson, who put in an uninspired performance against Adrian Diaconu on the undercard, but Golden Boy promoter Richard Schaeffer was already talking about finding loopholes to avoid the agreement. That could have a lot to do with southpaw Dawson's lack of box-office appeal, making him a high-risk, low-reward foe for Hopkins. At times, Dawson lacked fire against Diaconu, but he remains a skilled boxer. And new trainer, Emanuel Steward, had him setting down on punches more to assert untapped power. In short, Dawson represents a tough night for Hopkins.

High-energy, fast-tempo fighters such as Joe Calzaghe and Jermain Taylor have established the formula to beat Hopkins, and a similarly energetic fighter such as Tavoris Cloud could provide the same kind of intrigue. Cloud is busy and durable but lacks imagination in the ring and is demonstrably easy to hit. He could be dangerous. Hopkins might find his strength and industriousness too much to handle, but he could also find Cloud's lack of ring acumen fairly easy to exploit. It also remains questionable whether such a fight could be made with Cloud's promoter, Don King.

In reality, the biggest name for Hopkins to face resides a weight class below at 168 pounds.

Without question, a bout against skillful Lucian Bute back in Montreal would easily be the biggest boxing event staged in Canada, short of the first Sugar Ray Leonard-Roberto Duran fight. Hopkins immediately approached Bute after defeating Pascal, proposing a showdown between the two. Without question, the undefeated Bute, with his speed, precision counterpunching, and devastating bodywork would likely present his most dangerous challenge. He would be the ultimate test for Hopkins and possibly the ultimate mistake.

Despite the options arrayed before him, there remains a simple question: At 46, after such a spectacular accomplishment, should Hopkins continue to fight? But as Hopkins says, "you don't retire from the ring; the ring retires you."

True, but here's hoping Hopkins' final act ends with his reputation pristine and that hubris does not leave him lying unconscious on the canvas in a faraway place as it did Roy Jones. Here's hoping Bernard Hopkins exits as the hero that he is. ■

Paul Salgado, THE RING's Canada correspondent, was ringside in Montreal for Hopkins-Pascal II.

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JORGE ARCE

The Man Who Upstaged Pacquiao

By Don Stradley

When Jorge Arce and Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. appeared at their prefight press conference, they seemed like part of a Telemundo comedy roast, playfully insulting each other in machine-gun Spanish. Arce seemed amused, content to let Vazquez talk and talk.

No one could blame Vazquez if he seemed keyed up. This was his chance to display his wares on the undercard of the most-watched boxing event of the year, the Manny Pacquiao-Shane Mosley pay-per-view from the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Despite the fight's high profile, Vazquez' promoter, Felix "Tuto" Zabala Jr., said, "We prepared the way we always do. Nothing is different."

But there *were* differences.

The first was the difference between the MGM Grand and the Silver Spur Arena in Kissimmee, Florida, where Vazquez has done most of his fighting. Kissimmee is about outdoor water parks and minor league baseball. Las Vegas is Bugsy Siegel's dream amplified and transmogrified. It's where tigers attack magicians. It's where cab drivers swill beer out of McDonald's cups. It's where Paris Hilton appears mysteriously at ringside. It's where Bob Arum brings you when he thinks you'll be the next Puerto Rican boxing star. Vazquez grooved on the place. Zabala said Vazquez took in the town like a "kid in a candy store."

The other difference was Arce, the smirking fellow sharing the dais, the one who is 31 but still looks like the kid who farts in the classroom. Zabala was respectful, describing Arce as "tough and hungry," but that was like saying Jack the Ripper had issues with women.

Arce does a lot of clowning—he once rode to the ring on a horse and says that some day he will fly in on a helicopter—but his playful side overshadows a history of brawling that borders on the obscene and an almost gleeful willingness to turn fights into bloodbaths.

"I have handpicked all of Wilfredo's opponents very carefully," Zabala told THE RING a few days before the bout. Labeling Arce as "WBO mandatory," Zabala lamented, "This is the first time I did not pick his opponent."

If there was any foreboding in Zabala's statement, it was lost on Vazquez. He rattled on at the press conference, the words flying from his mouth like frightened birds until Arce finally placed a finger to his lips to quiet him.

Arce knew whose story it was.

You have all heard how Arce stopped Vazquez in the 12th round of a tremendous fight, how Arce overcame a knockdown and a gruesome cut to overwhelm his younger, faster opponent, and how Vazquez' father threw in the towel to keep his son from enduring any more punishment.

But the other part of the story begins many months ago in 2009, when Arce suffered a one-sided TKO loss to Vic Darchinyan. That same year saw Arce lose a decision to Simphiwe Nongqayi, a bout that should've been his to win. Sure, Arce was still knocking guys out when he fought in Mexico, and he was working with different

SIZZLING TWO-WAY ACTION! Vazquez landed a lot of punches as Arce rushed in (top) and dropped the Mexican in the fourth round with a left hook. But Arce kept coming, walking through Vazquez' shots in order to land his bombs (bottom).

PHOTOS BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

trainers to add some finesse to his style, but his struggles at the elite level reached all the way back to 2007, when Arce lost nearly every round of a bout with Cristian Mijares. Arce, it seemed, was on the brink of becoming the sort of colorful journeyman you'd feed to a young buck like Vazquez.

But Arce refused to believe he was finished. Working strictly in Mexico, where he is enormously popular, Arce went about rebuilding his career, brick by bloody brick.

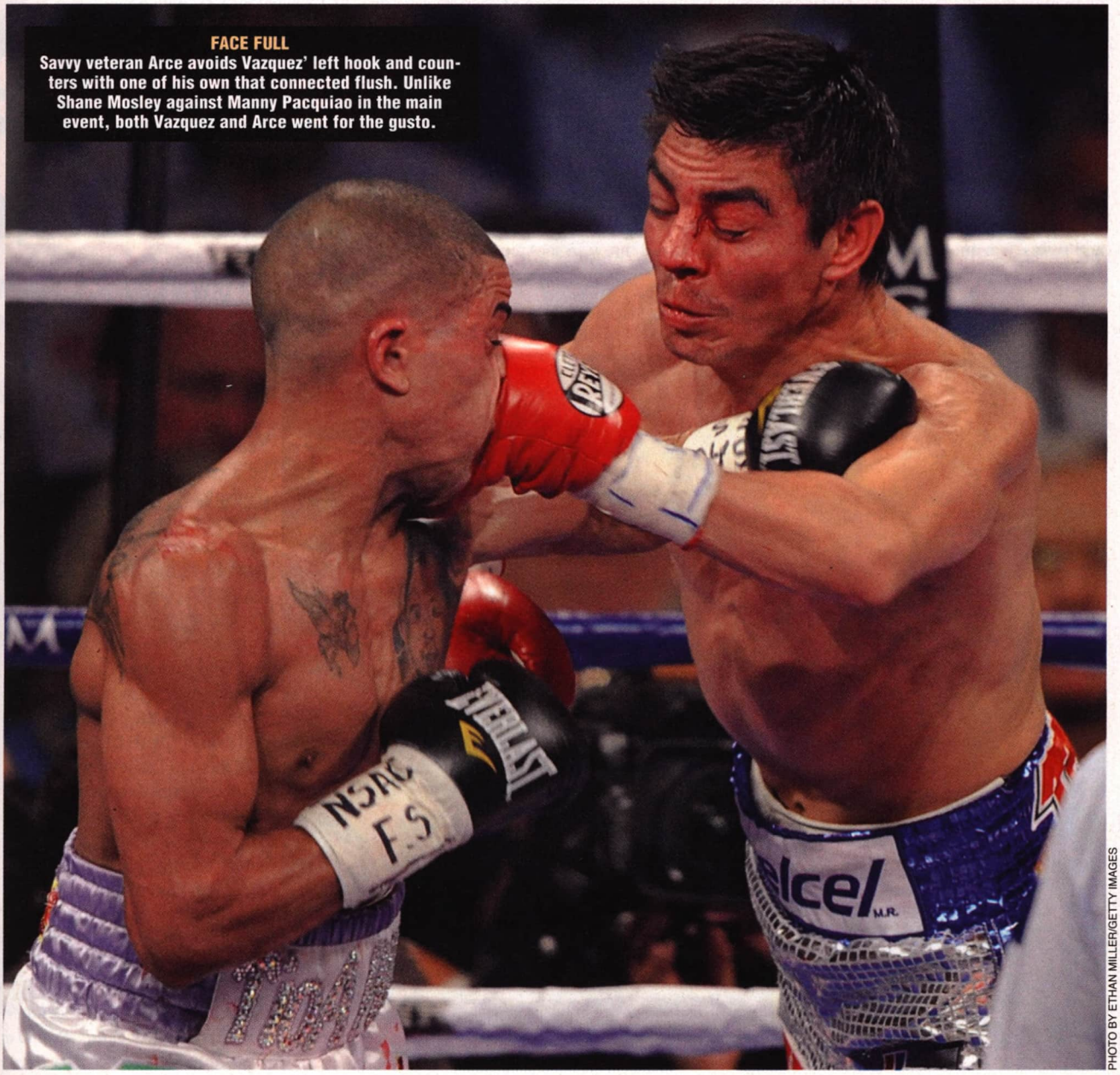
His first step was to leave the 115-pound class. After winning the vacant WBO junior bantamweight title by beating Angky Angkota in January 2010, he promptly vacated his alphabet bauble and appeared for his next bout weighing 119. He stopped trialhorse Cecilio Santos in seven. Next was former titlist Martin Castillo. Arce stopped him in one round with a bodyshot. Arce battled former flyweight titlist Lorenzo Parra to a draw in September, and he capped off 2010 with a one-round stoppage of Adolfo Ramos in December. His 2010 campaign saw him go 4-0-1 (3). It was the most active he'd been since 2000. "I feel renewed," he said.

Meanwhile, Vazquez was also enjoying 2010. He had a famous name, being the son of three-division titlist Wilfredo Vazquez, and possessed a crowd-pleasing style. He liked being recognized, he smiled easily. He won the vacant WBO super bantamweight title by beating Marvin Sansona, making Vazquez Sr. and Jr. the first father-son duo to win a title in the same weight division. ESPN produced a segment on Vazquez that ended with the two walking into the sunset, a proud father and son underneath a burnt orange sky.

Top Rank wanted in on the Vazquez scene. Vazquez' previous bouts had been promoted by Zabala's All-Star Boxing, a funky Miami-based company. The bout with Arce was the first Top Rank-All Star Boxing co-promotion of Vazquez and brought him beaucoup attention.

But the spotlight was new for Vazquez. Arce enjoys the spotlight like a child running under a sprinkler in the summertime.

He was going to show Vazquez why his Mexican followers called him "Travieso," the Wicked One.



FACE FULL
Savvy veteran Arce avoids Vazquez' left hook and counters with one of his own that connected flush. Unlike Shane Mosley against Manny Pacquiao in the main event, both Vazquez and Arce went for the gusto.

PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

From the opening round, Arce swarmed over Vazquez, jarring him with looping shots. Vazquez fired back, but Arce was like an electric bull in some roadside cowboy bar, bucking and lurching, unstoppable. Arce looked stout at 122, sturdier than Vazquez at the same weight. Vazquez kept finding himself on the canvas from pushes and slips as if he was too spindly to handle Arce's Wild West tactics. At the end of the fourth, though, Vazquez landed a left to the jaw that floored Arce. Despite Arce's aggression, it seemed Vazquez' slick professionalism would win out, after all. Arce rose, endured the standing eight count from referee Joe Cortez, and walked back to his corner with a bemused look on his face.

"I was never dropped before," Arce said later. "I was embarrassed."

Arce, Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico, was also dealing with a cut along the side of his nose, a cut deep enough that a man could lay his little finger inside it. (Three days after the bout, Arce underwent reconstructive surgery on the bridge of his nose.) But the cut was less of an issue than the fact that Vazquez' confidence was growing.

The Bayamon, Puerto Rico, native was timing Arce's charges and landing crisp, accurate punches. Arce responded with roundhouse shots designed to break faces and destroy dreams. Arce's strategy seemed to be throwing punches until the kid was dust. Vazquez boxed well, won some rounds, but Arce walked through his blasts, shook them off, and kept throwing. Punch stats revealed Arce threw nearly 300 more punches than Vazquez. It was insane. Sensing Vazquez was wilting in the 11th, Arce surged out for the final round and buried Vazquez under a typhoon of lefts and rights. Vazquez went googly-eyed. Vazquez' corner threw in a water bottle, a towel, anything they could, signaling surrender. At 0:55 of the 12th, Arce was the new WBO super bantamweight titleholder.

"People say, 'Arce's crazy,'" Arce said. "I'm very happy about this fight. I don't know what to say. Unbelievable."

He was more talkative a few days later, telling BoxingScene.com, "I warned the world, experts, journalists, and told Vazquez Jr. and his team, who belittled me—but that only motivated me more. Last Saturday, nobody was going to stop me. It wasn't easy. Vazquez is a great fighter, young, strong, brave, but that night I brought heart to spare."

Arce, 57-6-2 (44) may have won because he's had more than three times the number of fights as Vazquez, 20-1-1 (17). Or it could be, despite the wear of a long career, Arce had one great performance in him. Or maybe Vazquez simply was, as Arce had called him, "a baby," not ready for "a real fight with a real man."

Arce spoke from experience, for in 1999, Arce had been a baby when he met veteran Michael Carbajal in Tijuana and was stopped in 11 rounds. Arce was 20. Carbajal was 31, with a few losses on his ledger. Same scenario, different year, roles reversed. Carbajal retired after beating Arce. It was a nice note to go out on.

Arce, though, is not likely to retire. There was a parade for him in Los Mochis and enough accolades to make him think he's back on top. He has already called out Darchinyan for a rematch. He has claimed that hand problems prevented him from throwing punches in their 2009 match. Darchinyan heard the challenge and called Arce crazy. But sometimes all you need is to be a little crazy, crazy enough to think you could still matter in this sport after a year like the one Arce had in 2009.

THE END IS NEAR

Referee Joe Cortez takes a careful look as Arce pounds Vazquez along the ropes in the 12th round. Shortly afterward, Vazquez' father forced Cortez to stop the fight by throwing a water bottle into the ring.

PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

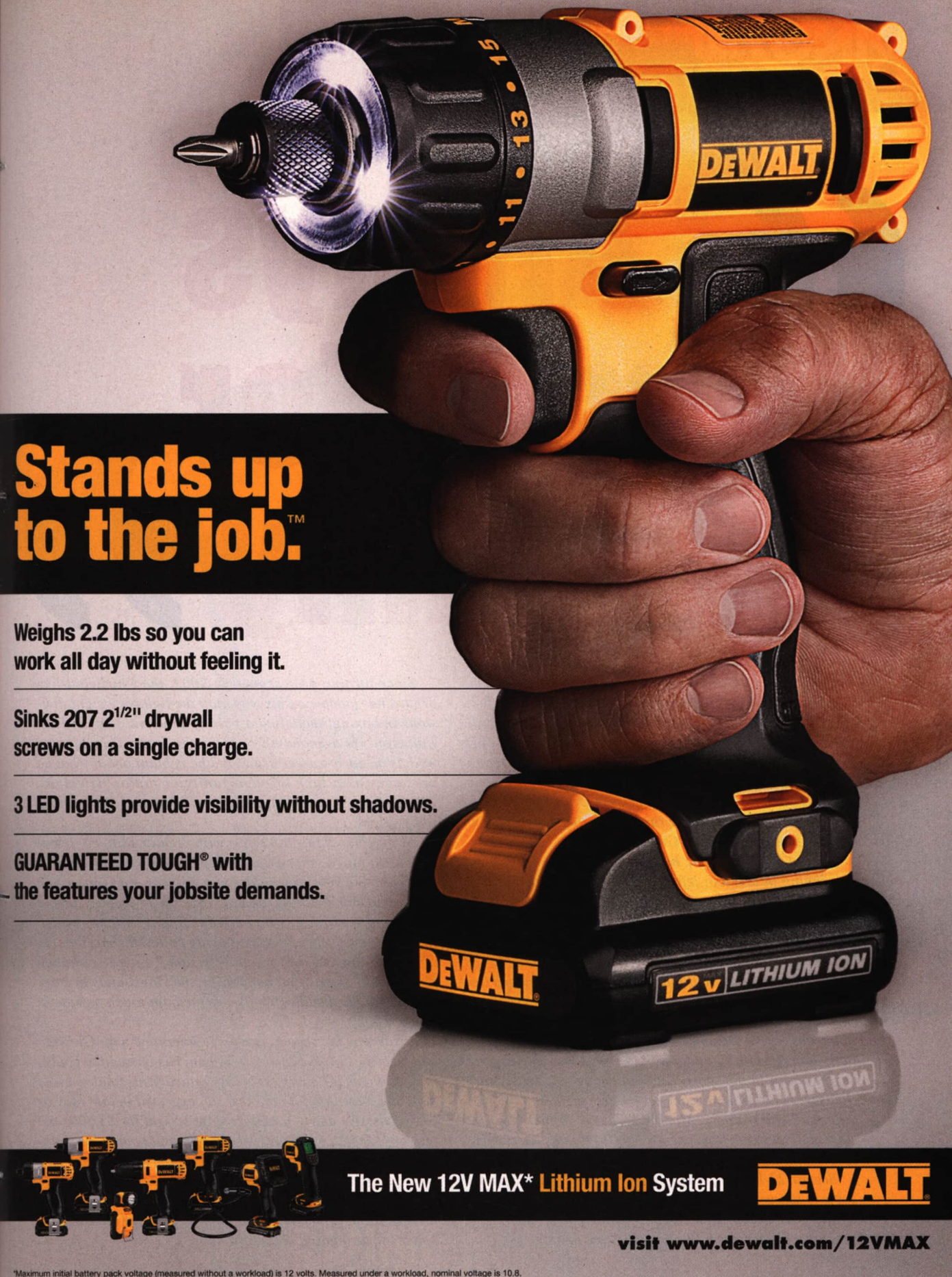
There has been spurious talk that Arce is the first Mexican to win titles in four weight classes, but two of his titles were nonsensical interim titles. The belt talk shouldn't eclipse Arce's real accomplishment in beating Vazquez. Not only is he a candidate for THE RING's Comeback of The Year, but anyone watching boxing for the first time to see what Pacquiao was all about may have come away thinking Arce, and not Pacquiao, is the world's best fighter.

"I promised my children that I was going to win this fight," Arce said at the postfight press gathering. "And if I did, I would take them to Disneyland."

Sounds fun, but we'll bet there are no rides at Disneyland with as many twists and turns as the career of Jorge Arce. He is Space Mountain with blood.

And if Vazquez wants to ride again, he'd better hang on tighter next time. ■

Don Stradley is a freelance writer from Massachusetts and a regular contributor to THE RING.



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"I Always Fought For My Family"

When Giovani Segura, THE RING's reigning junior flyweight champion, emulated his favorite Mexican fighters during informal street tussles with buddies, he always wanted to be Julio Cesar Chavez. So not long ago, in a telephone conversation with a friend back home in Ciudad Altamirano, it warmed Segura's heart when he heard a scene described in which two young boys couldn't enter the ring for their make-believe fight because both wanted to be Giovani Segura.

Segura epitomizes the hard-luck boxing story: difficult upbringing in Mexico; left behind by parents for financial reasons when they moved to California; found boxing as a late-teen and pursued it despite parental objection; doomed to fight for five-figure paydays, even as champion, because of his 108-pound frame.

He views the glass half-full. He wanted that teenaged freedom and basks in the independence he learned after his parents left him behind. His union with manager Richard Mota, who owns Azteca Boxing Club in the Los Angeles suburb of Bell, spurred him to understand he was capable of quick advancement in the sport. His first amateur trainer, Lucilo Nolasco, remains in his camp even after the addition of two different head trainers, Manuel "Chato" Robles from late 2006 until his death from pneumonia just months later and the controversial Javier Capetillo since late 2008.

Segura, 27-1-1 (23), briefly fooled his father by saying he was going to soccer practice rather than the boxing gym. Anastacio Segura wasn't happy with his son's choice. Today, family members are a big part of the 29-year-old fighter's camp.

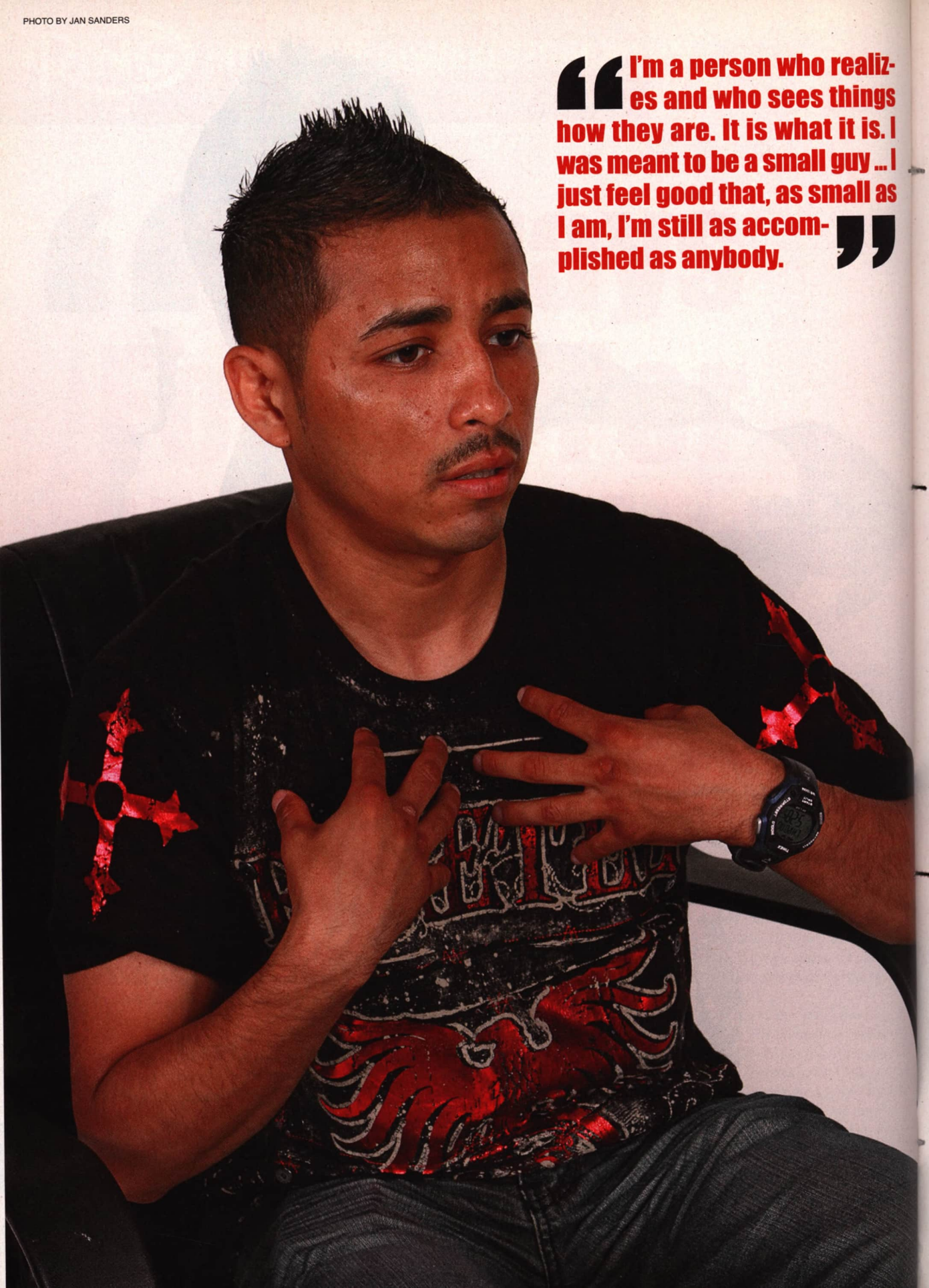
Since turning professional in 2003, the whirlwind-like Segura has pummeled his way atop the lightest weight divisions in boxing, including a pair of knockout wins of Ivan Calderon. He avenged his only loss, to Cesar Canchila, as well as an early-career draw, and he is blunt about what he perceives as a lack of opportunity at junior flyweight, which, along with weight issues, may command him to move to flyweight.

At the time of this interview with regular RING contributor David Mayo, shortly after Segura's April victory over Calderon, the WBC titleholder was 33-year-old Gilbert Keb Baas, who had 20 losses, and the IBF titlist was 40-year-old Luis Alberto Lazarte, who had nine losses. Although each later lost those titles, Segura openly called their reigns "a disgrace" and his own weight division "a joke" although his bravado about what happens in the ring stands in stark contrast to his humble, family-oriented approach outside it. Mayo reports:

"This was my second extensive interview with Giovani, and he comes across as the everyman. His immediate goal is to buy a home for himself, his wife Yetlandy, his four-year-old daughter Katie, and a newborn son expected in late May or early June. He drives a Mercedes he bought for $3,500, and his wife's vehicle is 10 years old, yet he still bought his mother a small SUV so she could drive to church and transport his siblings. He would save money to buy shoes for his brothers and sisters when they were younger and still does today. As focused as he is on boxing, he's also that intent on making a better life for himself and his family."

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS



"I'm a person who realizes and who sees things how they are. It is what it is. I was meant to be a small guy ... I just feel good that, as small as I am, I'm still as accomplished as anybody."

The Ring: Is your daughter old enough yet to know what her father does for a living?

Giovani Segura: When I come back from sparring, I'll get a bruise or a swollen lip, something like that. She always notices this. She'll tell me to sit down, and then she goes and wets a towel and rubs the spot and tells me that she's going to cure me and it's going to be okay. I've told her that it's because I do boxing and it happens. She understands, and she tries to help.

The Ring: You've been very specific about how just seeing her in her crib drove you professionally. Now that you're about to have a son, what unique motivation do you draw from that?

GS: When we had my daughter, I wanted a boy. A father always wants a boy, and everybody was expecting a boy. But I had a beautiful daughter, and I thank God for her. Now, I wasn't expecting a boy, and he comes. Everybody's excited, my friends, my manager—we get along really good—and everybody has daughters. They're all like: "We all wanted boys. Now you're having a boy." I'm going to name him Giovani Jr. That's for sure.

The Ring: Have you ever had a chance to ask your own parents how it affected them to make the difficult decision to temporarily leave you and your brother behind when they moved to the US with four of your brothers and sisters?

GS: We were already actually mature enough to take care of ourselves. We started working when we were 12, 13, and that made us really, really ready to survive. So we were actually pushing them to leave. We wanted to have our own space already. You know, as teenagers, we wanted to make our own rules. So we were always like, "It's okay, mom." And my brother was always like, "Let's do everything okay so they'll have confidence in us." They used to call me, call my brother, asking how we were doing. They used to call neighbors to keep an eye on us and ask how we were doing. They didn't worry about us because we were always in sports, always in soccer. We were very competitive. That was our life. Go to school, work, and just play soccer on the weekends. And we were always surrounded by good people and stayed away from the bad people.

The Ring: How old were you then?

GS: I was 16, and my brother was 15. It was three years before we moved to California.

The Ring: How did you get by?

GS: We had a place where we fixed tires. Everything was done by hand. We didn't have the machines. I even know how to fix semi truck tires. So we learned everything as a kid, in a tough neighborhood to survive. It's easy to learn when you need food on your table.

The Ring: You still have to fight frequently to keep food on the table and to try to establish some long-term financial security in a short-term profession. Do you ever feel pressured by that need?

GS: Yeah, as a matter of fact, right now, everybody is expecting me to go have a good time right now. You know what? I'm back in the gym. I have a fight already. I'm fighting May 28, and I have to take advantage. I've been telling my manager to keep pressuring the promoters because I want to fight. Right now, I'm saving the pennies because I want to buy a house as soon as possible. You never know, in the future, what could happen. Whatever happens, at least I want to have a place to stay for my kids. That's one of my big goals right now. That gives me the drive to keep on going. It gives me the hunger to give my kids the life that I didn't have, a better life. And I'm fighting for all of that right now."

The Ring: What do you think when you see other champions who make so much money and are so flamboyant, throwing cash into crowds like Floyd Mayweather, going bankrupt after earning hundreds of millions like Mike Tyson?

GS: I'm a person who realizes and who sees things how they are. It is what it is. I was meant to be a small guy. I only can say thank you to God for everything. This is my destiny and I have to fight through it, you know? I enjoy watching people being successful. I'm a fan of successful people. I just feel good that, as small as I am, I'm still as accomplished as anybody and I have everything to make it happen. I have the charisma. I have the connection with the people that I need to have. But, unfortunately for me, I believe that I haven't had the exposure that I need. I think that Top Rank pays more attention to big fighters, big names. All I need is a little push. In Mexico, I'm a big guy because the media's right there. The media opened the window for the people to know me, to know who I am, to realize that I'm a normal guy who likes to have fun, who enjoys this and who gives the crowd everything they want to see from a guy like me, who represents the country and makes the people proud to be their champion.

But, unfortunately, in the United States, it's not the same. They do it only with the same guys. I know how it is. I just have to find my way to work and find a little spot, find a little window to be open for me. If they don't open it for me, I have to find a way because I think I'm a smart guy who's working his way up the hard way. But I'm going to do it. If I have to do it the hard way, I'll do it. I wish I could make all those millions of dollars. It's not possible, but I'm pretty sure I'm going to work my way through it and do something about it.

The Ring: Have you set any particular guidelines since becoming champion?

GS: When I wake up, from 4:30 AM to 3 PM, I don't like to be bothered at all. I always tell my manager and my wife, "Whatever you want me to do or whatever I need to do, do it after three." I don't like to be bothered. That's one thing that I'm really strict with.

The Ring: You went to elementary school a year in the US and then returned to Mexico. How were you able to keep your English sharp?

GS: I learned to read fast. When we left to [go to] Mexico, we took Disney videos, those sing-along songs, and I used to watch them. When I used to watch movies in Mexico, I tried to never read the words (subtitles). There were a few guys who knew how to speak English. I really liked MTV. I liked listening to rock, Limp Bizkit, Korn, all that kind of music. It kept me in touch with the language. I like my two worlds. I knew since I was a kid and I went to school here that the United States was a different environment than being in Mexico. Here, if you go to school, you don't work. In Mexico, you have to work to survive. It doesn't matter if you're a kid or you're not. You have to work and you have to find the way to survive.

I knew I was going to come, one of these days, to the United States, and that made me not forget the language. I always told my mom, "One of these days, I'm going to work in the United States and get us out of this hole." And I grew up with that mentality. I told my mom I'd be somebody and I'd help them out. I always had that on my mind. I always fought for my family.

The Ring: What education did you receive through forced independence that you wouldn't have gained otherwise?

GS: It made me realize how the world runs. It made me realize that I'm ready for it and that I have no fear to do something because I know I've been through a lot of hard things. It was our destiny to go through what we went through. It made me a stronger man in everything I do. Every little thing, I try to do it as best I can. And I'm very thankful for every little thing that I have. I'm thankful to God for what I have. I'm fighting now to be a better man, to do a lot of good things, and, of course, to have a better life.

The Ring: What was the worst job you ever had?

GS: The worst job had to be McDonald's because you'd be standing up the whole day just doing nothing, just asking the people what kind of food they want. Sometimes, there was nothing to do, and you'd just be standing there, doing nothing. It was one of the worst jobs ever because I'm a really active man. I really want to be doing something. Sometimes,

"The worst job had to be McDonald's because you'd be standing up the whole day just doing nothing, just asking the people what kind of food they want."

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

I would ask the manager if I could do something else, and he wouldn't let me because I was really good at taking orders.

The Ring: So the landscaping work, the tire business, where you were busy all the time, those jobs appealed more to you?

GS: Yeah, because I think I was used to rough work. Then I got here, and one of my first jobs was McDonald's. I couldn't believe they pay you this much money. I was making $7 an hour, and, for me, it was a lot. I couldn't believe they paid that much for you to be standing up the whole day, doing nothing. They just asked you to be clean. It was crazy, but it was really boring. I'd be looking at the clock, hoping it would go faster, and waiting for something to do.

The Ring: Was it your mother who was suspicious of Richard Mota's motives when he told your parents that he thought you had potential as a boxer?

GS: It was my dad. My mom didn't really pay that much attention to what I was doing. She was a housewife. My dad was the one watching every move that I made because I would go to work with my dad every day in the landscaping business. He knew my schedule, he knew what I was doing and he found it suspicious. I would wake up at four in the morning to get my run and be ready at seven to go to work. We would come out of the yard at 3 PM and get to the house at four. If we caught traffic, sometimes it would be five before we got home. The gym closed at seven, so sometimes I would leave food on the table to go train. And my dad would see everything. He'd be like, "This guy is crazy. He's in the yard, working hard in the sun, runs in the morning, and then doesn't eat." He would see everything I would do. He didn't know I was training every night. It was really hard for him to see that I was training 100 percent at a sport that I'd never done [before] in my life and being serious about it. For him, the common sense was that I didn't have a chance. I was already 19 and just starting to train. And he was like, "Hey, what are you trying to do here?" And I was like, "I don't know. I'm going to see how far I can get." He was saying they're probably putting things in my mind that I could be professional, but really they were planning to make me a guy they could beat to build up somebody's record. But I said, "I'm not planning to be that; I'm planning to be somebody." We always had that argument. I told him I was having fun in the sport. I liked it.

The Ring: Why were you able to adapt to boxing so easily?

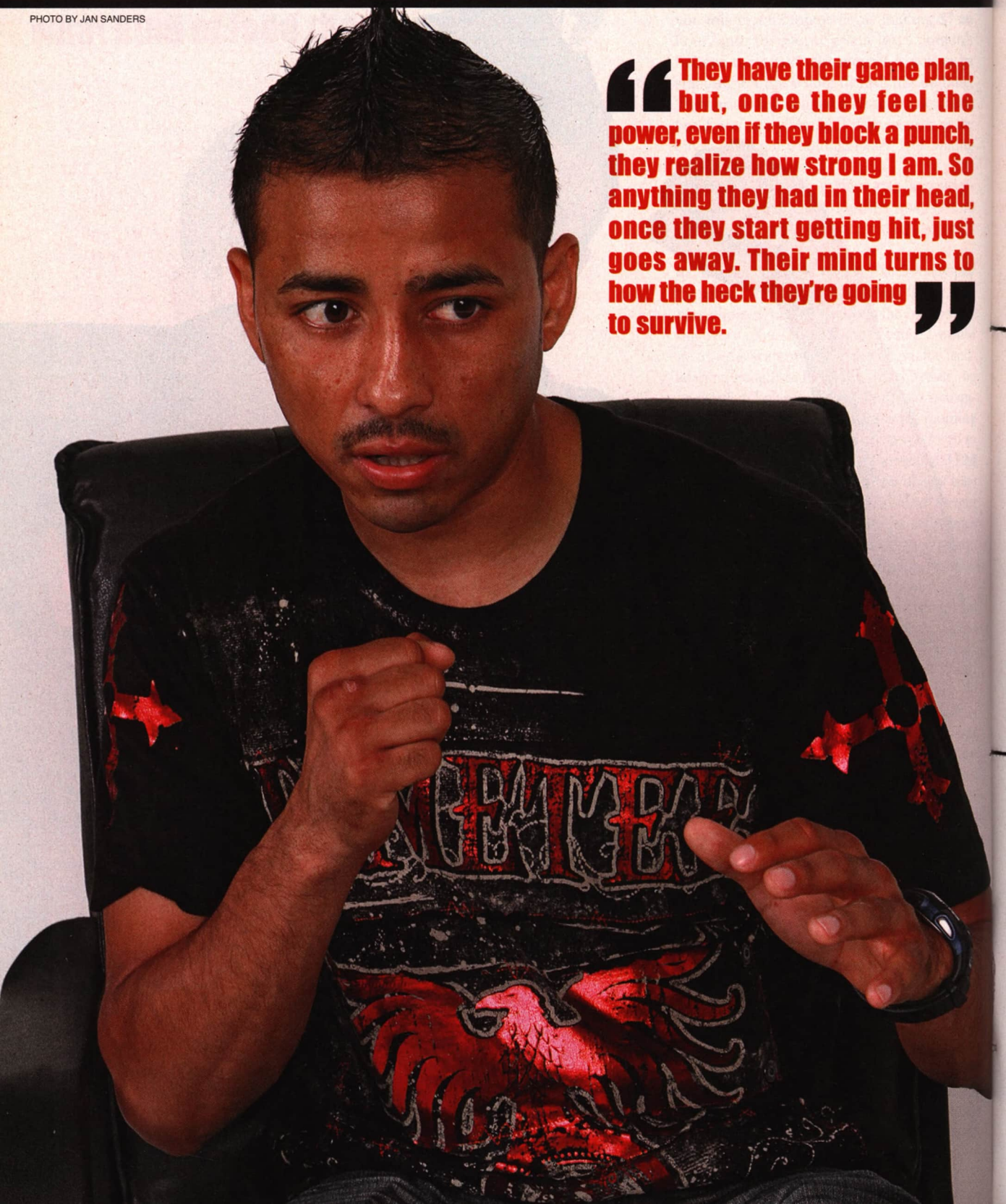
GS: I would get in fistfights in Mexico with bigger guys, and that was the rule. It was the law. It was a jungle. You had to fight to get some respect. Guys here, they didn't understand that. The guys here would be intimidated

“Boxing was always fun for me. I always wanted to box bigger guys, stronger guys than me. I always wanted to box until I stopped them. I didn’t realize what I was doing. I was learning a lot, learning fast, and people were taking me to different levels really fast.”

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

by one another. Guys would be tying the gloves up, and they'd be like, "Oh, I'm nervous. I'm going to spar with this guy, and he's had this amount of championship fights." That was crazy to me. I'd be wondering why he was scared. He had gloves. He had headgear. I didn't understand why people would get scared or nervous. I was like, "This is fun, just go out there and do your best." Boxing was always fun for me. I always wanted to box bigger guys, stronger guys than me. I always wanted to box until I stopped them. I didn't realize what I was doing. I was learning a lot, learning fast, and people were taking me to different levels really fast. Then, Richard told me I was doing really good and that they were going to take care of me. That's when my dad got really worried, when they said I had a future in boxing and they wanted to help me. He would take my check so I wouldn't be able to pay the monthly fee at the boxing gym.

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS



"They have their game plan, but, once they feel the power, even if they block a punch, they realize how strong I am. So anything they had in their head, once they start getting hit, just goes away. Their mind turns to how the heck they're going to survive."

The Ring: How has his perspective changed over the years? Do your parents go to your fights now?

GS: Actually, half of the camp was my family for this last fight because I told my mom, "Oh my God, guess what? I'm going to fight Calderon again at 108." She said, "Mijo, you're going to do that again?" After the first fight, my father told me he switched off the computer because he didn't want my mom to see the pictures of how I looked at the weigh-in. He said I looked like a skeleton. It was awful because I was struggling to drop weight. I was overweight on the weigh-in morning. I was dried out. I told my family what I went through. So we talked to my manager about going to 112. But my manager said, "You know what, Giovani, it's a big chance. Why don't you think about it?" I asked him what weight, and he said 108. I said, "You know what? I don't think I can make 108 again." He said he tried to make the fight at 112, at 110, but Calderon wouldn't do it. But they offered me a decent payday. So my mom said, "If you want, I'll clean your house and I'll cook for you." So I decided to do that.

It was really good for me because one of the hardest-working people at my camp was my mom. I would go to the kitchen, and she would follow me. Everything that happened in the kitchen, she was boss. She was tough. She'd say, "I don't want you to struggle and go through what you went through, so I'm sorry I have to do this." She would only give me the right foods, and it helped me because I was much stronger than I was in the first fight, and she had a lot to do with it.

The Ring: You've won multiple fights with bodypunching, including both fights against Ivan Calderon, whom you stopped twice because of bodyshots. Where did you develop that commitment to bodywork?

GS: When I was an amateur, everybody would go to the head. One, two, three to the head, one, two, three to the head. Kids would not throw to the body. When I would throw combinations, I would think: *Wait a minute. I can throw a straight hand here but then hook down here.* And sometimes, I would start going to the body, and they would drop their hands, and I would finish them off upstairs. I keep using that formula, and it keeps on working because I hit hard. I just need to find the spots, find the right shots and just land them. I know I hit hard. It's just a matter of finding the right timing, switching it up and down, and taking chances.

The Ring: When did you first know that you have exceptional punching power?

GS: I think when I won my first title, the California title. I only had, like, seven fights [actually six] and I knocked the guy (Jose Antonio Rico) out in the first round. I dropped him three times. The last time I dropped him, it looked like I pushed him with both hands. I hit him with a hook and a right hand, and he went flying back. I think that was one of the best punches I ever landed. When I saw him fall back, I thought: *That's crazy! It looks like somebody pushed him.* He just went flying!

The Ring: Your relationship with your original amateur trainer, Lucilo Nolasco, has changed a lot over the years, even as you brought in more experienced trainers to oversee your camps. Can you explain that relationship, why it's worked for you, and why you brought on other trainers when you did?

GS: I started with Nolasco, and he's the type of guy who depends on the gym. That's his job. He gets his weekly pay from there. He doesn't have the time to give me. He can't travel to Mexico and to all the gyms because he has so many kids, so many amateurs, in the gym. And I don't have the money to afford to take my trainer and keep paying him monthly or weekly. It's just too hard for me. It's not his fault; it's not our fault. Capetillo has the time for that. So Richard Mota, my manager, made the decision to switch to Capetillo. I told Capetillo, "I'm okay with you. I have nothing against you, but it's hard to find a trainer who can train you right-handed and left-handed." Capetillo, at that time, still had [Antonio] Margarito, Miguel Vazquez, and a couple more fighters, so it was hard for Capetillo to work with everybody. So I said to him, "What if brought in Lucilo to help you with me? I think it would help us because I don't get tired at all when I'm a southpaw, and Lucilo knows me very well." And [Capetillo] said, "If you think that's going to work, let's do that." From there on, we just had a good relationship. Everybody gets along, and there are no hard feelings for anybody. It's just a good environment right now. It's just like recess at school when we go train. Lucilo will ask Capetillo how I'm doing and tell him to push me hard. Lucilo is one of the best guys I've ever met. He tells me: "Listen to Capetillo, don't ever let me down, be a good guy, and train hard because they're going to ask you, 'Who was your trainer before?' and I don't want them blaming anything on me." There was never any problem, ever, from the very first day we trained with Capetillo.

The Ring: You had the brief relationship with Miguel "Chato" Robles, and, while he didn't have much of a chance to leave his full impression on you, what did you take from that time together with him?

GS: Chato Robles, who was one of the smartest trainers, told me, "In the future, you're going to stay southpaw because you're stronger that way," and it happened. Most of the time, I ended up fighting most of the fight southpaw. And then, he told me, "Whenever you get hugged, because this is going to happen to you a lot, you have to find a way to get rid of one hand and start punching with one hand. And he'll let you go." That's what I did with Calderon and what I've done with a lot of guys. If they try to hold my hands, I try to get one free and punch with them inside. That's something I learned from Chato. He had a lot of fighters, but, before he passed away, he told me I was going to do big things. I'm a good learner, and I think I would have learned a lot more from him. But then he had his problem. I just thank God I had a chance to learn from him.

The Ring: I know you've been questioned about your relationship with Capetillo as it relates to your own punching power, given his involvement in the loaded-gloves incident before the Shane Mosley-Antonio Margarito fight. How did you feel about being questioned with some level of suspicion about an incident you had nothing to do with?

GS: Everybody started throwing questions at me after what happened with Margarito. Especially, with me, because I'm a big puncher, everybody was like, "You're probably knocking them down because Capetillo puts stuff in the gloves." In the beginning, it was hard. Everybody was serious when Capetillo was around. It was really hard for Capetillo. We tried not to touch that thing as much as we could, but we worked through it. We helped him a lot too, all the fighters, all the crew, we were very supportive with it. And he started changing because we started talking to him, saying, "You know what, keep on working. Whatever happened happened. Nobody's perfect." I never questioned about what happened. I've never asked him and I never will. I just told him, "I'm never going to ask you what happened there or stuff like that; your thing is your thing. But all I want to tell you is you're a happy guy, you're always messing around, and I feel bad because you're not the same guy. So tell us whatever you need from us. However we can help you, just let us know." He felt really supported, and, all of a sudden, he started being like a kid again, messing around with everybody, making fun here, and making fun there. And now we even joke about it. We'll see a guy with a broken hand and we'll say, "How'd it happen? Maybe Capetillo put that stuff in his hands."

The Ring: Does Capetillo wrap your hands?

GS: No. There's only been one person who ever has wrapped my hands, and that's Arturo Mota, Richard Mota's dad.

The Ring: Could any fighter have loaded handwraps not knowing it?

GS: The problem is he [Capetillo] never wrapped my hands, whatsoever, so I really don't know how it feels. I don't know how he wraps. In fact, I don't know how any other people wrap. When I go to the gym, I wrap my own hands. When I'm going to fight, Arturo

does it because he's really jealous of that. Arturo's really jealous that nobody touches my hands except him, right from my very first fight. So I really don't know how it feels, a handwrap from Capetillo or any other person.

The Ring: Your seek-and-destroy approach also leaves you open and vulnerable at times. Does the perception concern you that you sacrifice defense for offense, and why haven't more opponents been able to take advantage of it?

GS: Because they worry about my power. They worry about not getting hit. I destroy their mind all the time. They don't realize how hard I hit, and then they're on the ground. When it's over, they realize it's like a hammer hitting them in the head and that I had so much power they never could have imagined. That happens all the time. They have their game plan, but, once they feel the power, even if they block a punch, they real-

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

"People are asking why I don't fight Gonzalez, asking if I'm scared of him ... Why would I fight Roman Gonzalez if I am not going to get paid? If I fight Gonzalez, I would destroy him. I don't have fear."

ize how strong I am. So anything they had in their head, once they start getting hit, just goes away. Their mind turns to how the heck they're going to survive. They're more focused on how not to get hit and how to get away from it than throwing some punches.

When I started, the critics were saying I have one of the worst defenses in the game. When I fought Calderon, they said he had a better defense. But then I ask how they can say that when I've never been cut. The closest thing I ever had to being hurt was a black eye, and that was in the [Cesar] Canchila fight. I never even had a swollen eye. I've never bled from my nose. Then you see Calderon, with all the face cuts, eyebrows, everything. How can that be? Look at my background; look at my fights. I always come out clean. How can they say I have a bad defense? Yeah, I get hurt, but I don't really get hit a lot.

The Ring: Before your fights against Calderon, did you weigh in on any unofficial scale to see how much weight you gained between the official weigh-in and the fight?

GS: The first time, I weighed about noon on the day of the fight, and I was about 122. The second one, I weighed in before I left the hotel, which was around 5 PM, and I was weighing 125.

The Ring: What has the process of making 108 pounds been like recently?

GS: Once I hit 115, if I can drop a half-pound, that's a lot for me. Sometimes, it would take me two days to drop a half-pound. Sometimes, I would push myself to not eat for a whole day. Capetillo would tell me that the only answer is that God was with me because he'd never seen anybody go through what I had been through and be as strong as I am.

The Ring: Early in your career, you fought three times against a guy named Benjamin Garcia—like you, a Mexican-American, California resident, almost exactly the same age as you—and ended up with a draw, a first-round knockout win, and a split-decision win. From that point forward, you became a champion and Garcia got fed to the toughest flyweights around. What did you learn from that?

GS: It was because I was a four- or six-round fighter and would be called with two or three days' notice. I was not able to say no at that time because it was a chance, it was an opportunity, and I never wanted to say no. I learned the hard way that to go into a fight, you have to go 100 percent, every day. I didn't, and that's what happened. I didn't train as good as I should, and I got a draw. From then on, I've kept my feet on the ground and realized that this is serious and, if I'm not 100 percent for a fight, then I'd rather wait. I think that's when I changed a lot. What I learned from him was that I made mistakes before the first fight with him.

The Ring: Whom do you admire in boxing?

GS: Well, there are many. I admire a lot from the past and I admire a lot from the present. Mike Tyson was one of my favorites. Ricardo "Finito" Lopez. Oscar De La Hoya, for what he's done inside and outside of the ring. Manny Pacquiao. Floyd Mayweather. Nonito Donaire is one of my favorite fighters. Julio Cesar Chavez, if not for him, I don't think Giovani Segura would exist because he's the man I would watch the most when I was a kid.

The Ring: Have you ever considered what you might do after boxing?

GS: I'm always thinking what my options are. The main thing right now is to buy a house. That will be the base for starting to do something after boxing. But right now, I'm very focused and I'm planning to be fighting for a while. Thank God I haven't been cut, I haven't been hurt, and I don't have that many rounds on my background. So I'm taking advantage of it, and I'm pushing everybody to put me on their cards as much as possible. But yeah, I think about it. I see friends who are starting businesses, who are doing good. I ask them what's good, what's a good investment, things like that. The one thing I've learned is that whatever the business is, there's no better thing than taking care of it yourself. I think that's going to be me. I'm looking for options. I might be on TV: I might be a businessman, or I might have a tire business. I'll see what I'm best at doing and go from there.

The Ring: You have The Ring title at 108 and have said alphabet unifications might appeal to you, but, as we speak, the WBC and IBF titleholders are 33 and 40 years old, respectively, and have 29 combined losses. Then, there's Roman Gonzalez, the WBA titleholder, who is 23 years old, undefeated, has a good knockout ratio, and had a title at 105. If you were to stay at 108, would that fight appeal to you?

GS: I think I would destroy them, every one of them. It's just ridiculous. This division is ridiculous. It can't be possible that Ulises Solis is struggling with a 40-year-old man (Solis fought Lazarte to a draw in their first fight and then won the rematch days after this interview), and then you've got Gilberto Keb Baas beating Omar Nino (Baas also lost his title after this interview to Adrian Hernandez). People are asking why I don't fight Gonzalez, asking if I'm scared of him. No, I'm not scared of him. That's as ridiculous as this weight division. I want to get paid. Why would I fight Roman Gonzalez if I am not going to get paid? If I fight Gonzalez, I would destroy him. I don't have fear. Comments, to me, are just comments. Nothing else. I think if I fought one of the champions right now, I would look bad, just by fighting him. I don't think I have anything to prove.

The Ring: So is there any reason to stay at 108 then? Is 112 definitely next?

GS: The only reason for me to stay at 108 is if I got a good payday. That's what I'm looking for. I think I've proven all I needed to in that division. Why not take in another division and give people the fights people want to see? Right now, the decision is not on me, and it's not on the opponents. It's on the people. That's how we get paid, because of them. I think I have everything it takes to take over the 112 division and do my thing, just like I did at 108. I'll just take my time at 112 and see what's a good offer. There are also good fighters at 115, and I think I could do good there. I always spar and work with bigger guys than me, and I have the power for that division. And I think I have the height and the body to grow into 115.

The Ring: Showtime recently has presented tournaments in a couple of different weight divisions, with mixed results for different reasons, but, if a television network or promoter were to put together a tournament with the four best fighters at 108 and 112, which four should it be?

GS: I think it should be Roman Gonzalez, Giovani Segura, Ulises Solis, and I'm not sure about the other one.

The Ring: The unfortunate truth is that many American boxing fans don't know anyone you just named. What can be done to increase US fans' interest in the lightest weight divisions?

GS: I have the confidence. I have the power, and I have the mind to call out anybody. I think we need that more than anything. I feel like I'm alone in that respect. That's one of my concerns right now. Like the fight between Solis and this old man. That's ridiculous. They're making it out like it will be, wow, some incredible thing when Solis wins. I find it embarrassing that he wasn't able to step up and win the first fight. I need someone to step up and challenge me, to make the people say, "What can Giovani do?"

The Ring: So what can Giovani do?

GS: I have Facebook and Twitter. I'm asking the people who they want to see me fight. Part of the problem is that promoters don't push the smaller fighters, and they pamper their big-name fighters. That gets frustrating at times because I'm there, you know? Work with me. I'm here. It gets frustrating for me because I work really hard and I just want a little help. So this is the little push I need, just doing stuff like this interview. I'll do my part in the ring, and I'll be there outside the ring, for the fans too. I'm just waiting for people to open the door and join in on the party. ■

CUTMAN

The Boxing Musical Makes A Comeback

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN HELLER

PHOTO BY DIANE SOBOLEWSKI

***CUTMAN* CREW**
The new boxing musical (above) was the brainchild of composer Drew Brody (left), actor/writer Cory Grant (middle), and writer/director Jared Coseglia (right).

By Don Stradley

Ari Hoffman is a young Jewish man with dreams of being a boxing champion. His father, Eli, is a retired cutman with a shady past. They train in the basement of the synagogue where Eli works as a custodian. Eli teaches Ari how to punch but also hammers into Ari the importance of his Jewish faith.

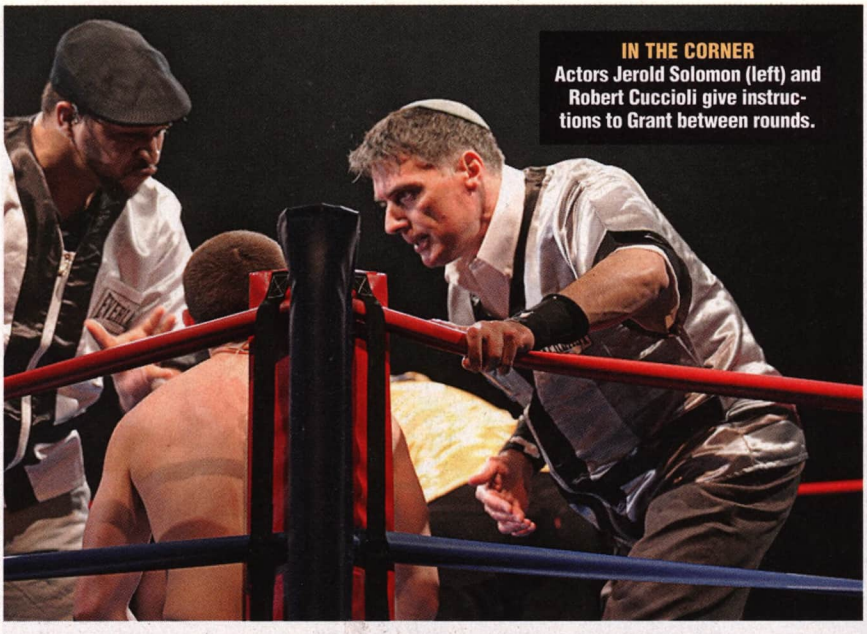
Ari, like all young men, wants to move beyond what his father can teach him. Without Eli knowing, Ari moves on to a local gym where he impresses Moe Green, a hyper industrious promoter-mogul. Green appreciates the novelty of a boxing Jew and steers Ari towards a quick-buck title shot. Ari craves stardom, but there are volcanic conflicts at the Hoffman house. The title bout is scheduled on one of the holiest days of the year for Jewish people. Ari is told that fighting on such a day is "a sin against God."

After the big fight, Ari undergoes a major crisis of faith. As Bob Dylan once sang, "You've got to serve somebody." But Ari doesn't know whom to serve.

This heavy scenario is the plot of *Cutman: A Boxing Musical*, performed this past May and June at Goodspeed's Norma Terris Theater in Chester, Connecticut. The show, which producers hope will hit Broadway in 2012, is the brainchild of three young men: writer/director Jared Coseglia, composer Drew Brody, and actor/writer Cory Grant. The roots of the project go back to an unlikely source.

"It started when we saw *The Contender* TV series back in '06," Coseglia told THE RING. "The show was all about what happened behind the scenes. It was the first time I had an emotional, empathetic moment about boxers. Something about the backstory of these fighters and seeing how they sacrificed, how they were just trying to feed their families, and how they didn't come from privilege was really moving for me.

"I knew I wanted to write a play about a boxer. But that wasn't enough. It had to be something that was close and personal to us. We had all grown up Jews, with varying depths of faith, and we wondered what would happen when someone who was deeply



IN THE CORNER
Actors Jerold Solomon (left) and Robert Cuccioli give instructions to Grant between rounds.

PHOTO BY DIANE SOBOLEWSKI

faithful was confronted by an opportunity to have their dreams come true. What happens when those two things are in conflict? That was the germ and genesis of the play."

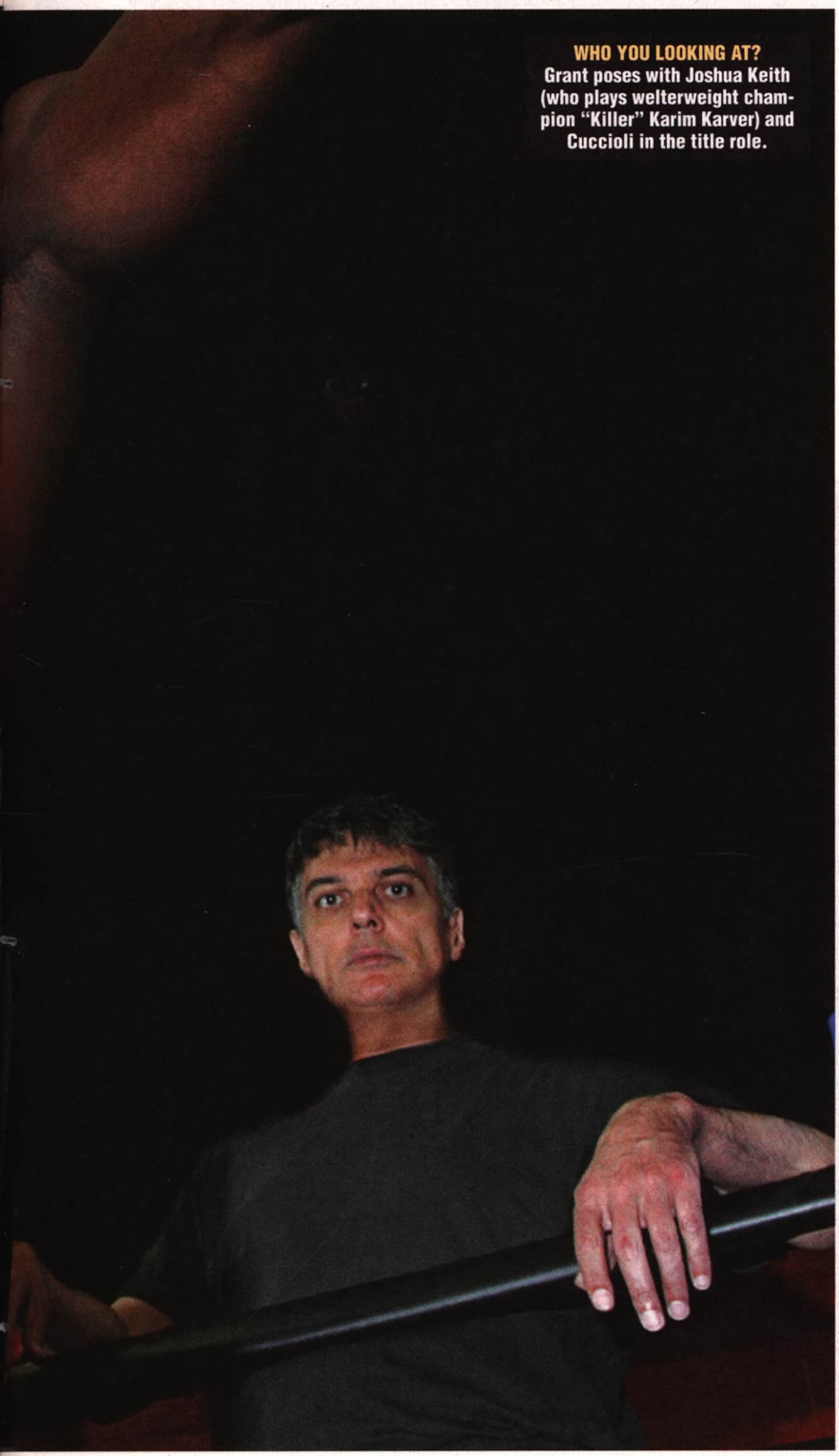
Another ingredient was Coseglia's fascination with hip-hop and R&B music.

"That type of music had not really become popular on Broadway. Since boxing and hip-hop are so intertwined, we knew the

PHOTO BY DIANE SOBOLEWSKI

music had to be there. The characters in the play sort of reflect the music they listen to. The father, Eli, listened to classic rock, Joe Cocker, Three Dog Night, so his songs were written to fit his background. Ari is younger, probably listens to Justin Timberlake, Usher. There's a song called "Killer Instinct," where Ari's trainer tries to teach the nice Jewish boy to be a killer, and that's probably the hardest hip-hop thing in the show. I'd love for some hip-hop artist to cover it."

While contemporary Jewish fighters such as Yuri Foreman and Dmitriy Salita might seem obvious sources of inspiration, Coseglia maintains their main influence was on the wardrobe department. "If you notice, Yuri and Dmitriy dress like old European men, with sweaters, hats, baggy pants. That was a major influence, aesthetically speaking," Coseglia said.



WHO YOU LOOKING AT?
Grant poses with Joshua Keith (who plays welterweight champion "Killer" Karim Karver) and Cuccioli in the title role.

Coseglia added that Salita hasn't been particularly supportive.

"Salita is uncomfortable supporting this play because he would never fight on Yom Kippur, which is a turning point in the story," Coseglia said. "See, what makes Ari a ticket seller is not his talent but his identity. For me, it's something akin to who Dmitriy Salita is as a person, a Jew, and as a boxer, and how it relates to ticket sales, and how he leverages all of those things in order to be successful. But what happens when success is offered to you in exchange for the principles you've held dear your whole life? Dmitriy is not willing to go there."

For those wondering, *Cutman* isn't merely *The Jazz Singer* rehashed.

"You have to know what everyone else has done about Jews who have been conflicted. We researched everything to make sure we didn't do the same thing," said Coseglia.

"It's more than just a boxing story," said New York stage veteran and Tony award nominee Robert Cuccioli, who plays Eli. "It's a family story; it's a religious journey with many layers to it. The music is amazing. The lyrics are amazing. The book has heart to it. I think people will walk away from it fulfilled and very touched."

"It's a show that women can bring their husbands and sons to," said Grant, who stars as Ari. "We had a goal. The show wasn't going to be for the average theatergoing audience. Because of the sports theme, because of the contemporary music, it was going to reach a wider group."

This is assuming that theatergoers have been pining for a boxing musical. Historically, audiences haven't flocked to them. There was *Seeing Stars*, a short-lived 1937 romantic comedy that featured songs and a boxing theme. There also was a 1958 Broadway dud called *The Body Beautiful* that collapsed in its corner after 60 performances. But if the backers of *Cutman* need a beacon, they can turn to *Golden Boy*, the 1964 Broadway smash that starred Sammy Davis Jr.

Golden Boy is usually considered a Broadway curiosity—boxers singing and dancing? Sammy Davis?—but, in its day, it battled along on Broadway for 18 months, earning four Tony Award nominations. A 2002 revival (with fight choreography by former middleweight contender Michael Olajide) inspired *The New York Times*' Ben Brantley to wonder how this "cobwebbed period piece" could still be so moving, particularly its musical score. "*Golden*

Boy rings with the sounds of the anger, skepticism, and high-flying hope of black Americans in 1960's Harlem, feeling the rumble of the swelling civil rights movement down south," Brantley wrote.

The source of *Golden Boy* was the 1937 drama of the same name by playwright Clifford Odets. The original play focused on a young, Italian-American who boxes to pay his way through medical school. The sad story ends with a climactic ring death. Odets captured the immigrant experience, the machinations of the boxing business, and the conflict within decent people who fight for a living, all in one tidy, three act package. Most boxing dramas since have owed something to Odets' script.

Golden Boy was turned into a 1939 movie starring William Holden. Thanks to late night television of the 1950s, the film became part of the American lexicon. Several fighters adopted the "Golden Boy" moniker long before Oscar De La Hoya, including Art Aragon, Joey DeJohn, and Donny LaLonde. They, or the agents who nicknamed them, were likely inspired by the Holden movie.

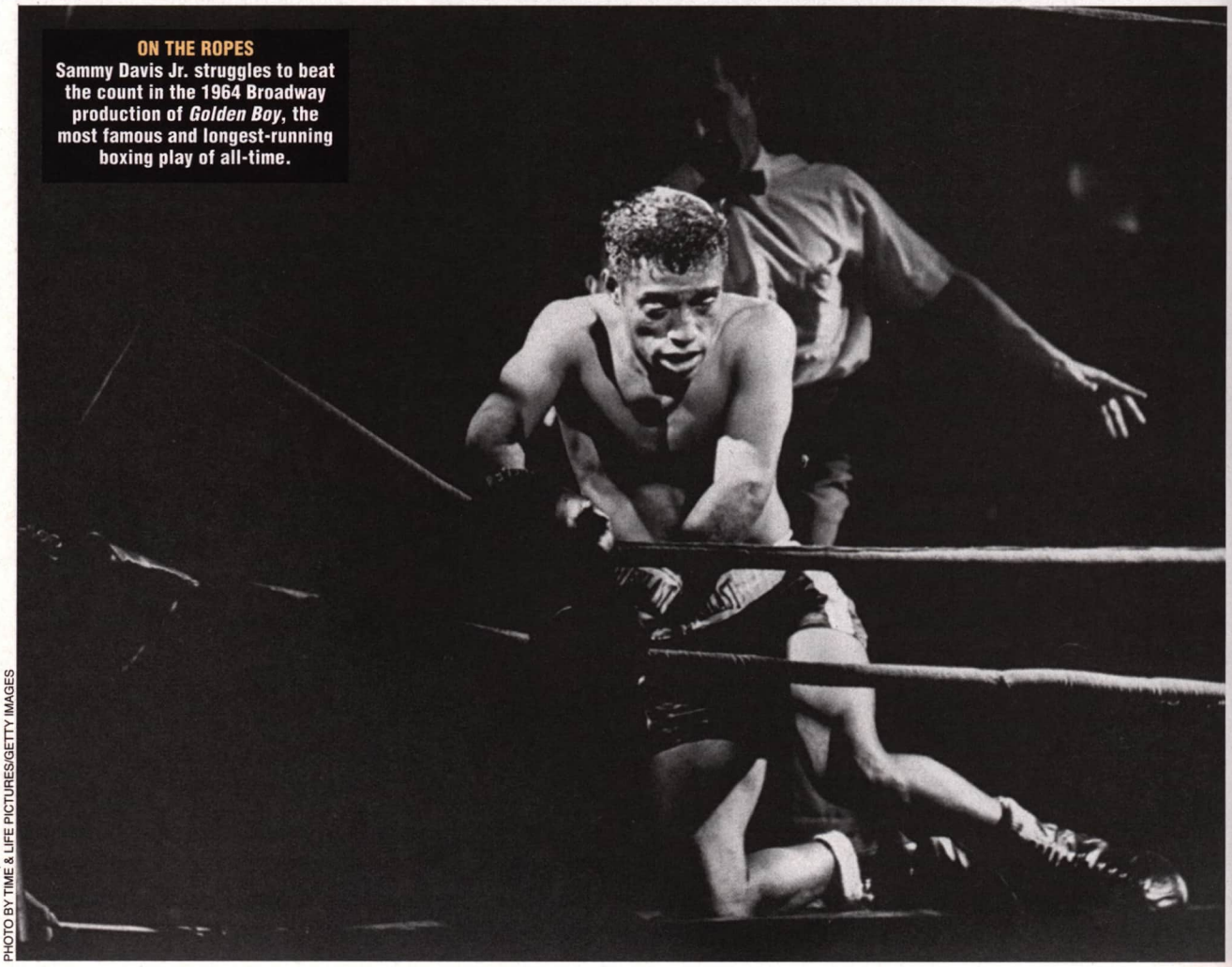
By the early 1960s, Broadway producer Hillard Elkins believed Odets' old play could be presented to a new audience, provided a few tweaks were made. Odets died before the new script could be written, which lead to Elkins hiring playwright William Gibson (*The Miracle Worker*) and director Arthur Penn (*Bonnie and Clyde*) to helm the updated version. A jazzy musical score was added, the players were recast as African-American, an interracial romance became part of the plot, and the dynamic Davis was cast as the fighter.

There were gimmicks too. A *Golden Boy* candy bar was issued by Necco, and former heavyweight champion Joe Louis was hired to teach Davis some boxing basics. Davis was also surrounded by some of the era's best young African-American talent, including Lou Gossett, Lola Falana, and later in the run, Ben Vereen.

Reviews were mixed—some found the revamped script preachy—but the combination of Davis' charisma, a strong review in *The New York Times*, and the climactic fight scene (called by the Associated Press "a marvel of acrobatic stagecraft") brought ticket buyers to Broadway's Majestic Theater for 568 performances.

The show's ace in the hole was timeliness. Davis' angry character trying to fight his way out of Harlem reflected the times, and events in the daily news seemed to feed the show and give it power. In March '65, Davis canceled several performances to join the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. At curtain calls, Davis engaged audiences with impassioned speeches about America's need to end bigotry. But while *Golden Boy* provided Davis with a great platform, it also was a soul-sucking monster that nearly did him in.

Davis endured several injuries and illnesses during the show's lengthy run, including a neck injury that put him in a hospital for several days. Accompanying Davis' physical problems were the show's financial woes. *Golden Boy* was such an expensive production that it never regained its initial investment. The show managed to be both a success and a bust.



ON THE ROPES
Sammy Davis Jr. struggles to beat the count in the 1964 Broadway production of *Golden Boy*, the most famous and longest-running boxing play of all-time.

PHOTO BY TIME & LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

NEXT STOP BROADWAY?
This is the poster for the Goodspeed Musicals production in Connecticut. Producers hope to hit The Great White Way in 2012.

Still, Davis owned a stake in the production and trudged on. When the show moved to London in 1968, 42-year-old Davis gamely commandeered the lead role until throat problems forced his exit. Davis would continue to perform songs from the show for the remainder of his career, and he performed the famous fight scene in his 1974 ABC special, *Sammy*. However, *Golden Boy* gradually faded into Broadway mythology. Now, four decades later, theater producers are gambling again on singing and dancing boxers.

Cutman: A Boxing Musical lacks the timeliness of *Golden Boy*, and it is not quite the ballsy, urban piece the show's producers believe it to be. Coseglia, Brody, and Grant may have set out to create something cutting edge, but the traditions of musical theater stubbornly refused to be ignored. The news is good, though. What the *Cutman* creators ended up with is a surprisingly moving family saga that might bring a tear to your eye.

The production in Connecticut had moments of real beauty and comedy, and the energetic cast was certainly worthy of a New York run. The music by Drew Brody may pull from hip-hop, but there's enough Broadway style singing in the show to satisfy any blue-haired ticket buyer in Manhattan. One number, "Ten in Ten," is an absolute showstopper, and, while some of the songs feel a shade too long, Brody has written at least one that already sounds like a classic. We're referring to the title song, "Cutman," sung by Cuccioli.

Who would've thought the most overlooked and underappreciated of boxing figures—the cutman—could be the centerpiece of such an emotional night of theater? In a way, Eli Hoffman is cut from the same material as Willy Loman from *Death of a Salesman*, another little guy who didn't get the glory but needs only to think of his son to make his heart soar. Unlike Loman, Eli is a dark, brooding figure. He hustles around the synagogue, sealing up the leaks during rainstorms just as he once sealed cuts on a fighter's brow. It's hard to not feel for the guy. He's a craftsman without a place to work. Cuccioli plays him perfectly, keeping just enough distance between himself and the audience to make us want to understand this hulking loner.

Fortunately, there is no death of a cutman here. Coseglia puts his characters through some agonizing moments, but he finds a soft place for them all to land. The final scene, which features Ari and Eli going through a simple boxing drill as Brody's beautiful music rises, is as satisfying as anything you'll see on a stage, or in a boxing ring, this year. ■

Don Stradley is a freelance writer from Massachusetts and a regular contributor to THE RING.

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WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS

Heavyweights

Chris Arreola KO 3 Nagy Aguilera
Evander Holyfield KO 10 Brian Nielsen
Kubrat Pulev KO 5 Derric Rossy
Alexander Petkovic W 12 Joseph Marwa
Travis Walker W 10 Alonzo Butler
Seth Mitchell KO 1 Evans Quinn
Deontay Wilder KO 1 Reggie Pena
Carlos Takam KO 6 Gbenga Oloukun
Ramiz Hadziaganovic KO 4 Laszlo Toth
Tom Dallas W 8 Zack Page
Gonzalo Basile W 8 Manuel Pucheta
Tye Fields KO 1 Konstantin Airich
Gregory Tony W 3 Evgeny Orlov
Tye Fields W 3 Michael Sprott
Mike Perez W 3 Kertson Manswell
Konstantin Airich W 3 Lucian Bot
Mike Perez KO 1 Gregory Tony
Mike Perez KO 1 Tye Fields

Cruiserweights

Denis Lebedev KO 10 Roy Jones
Giacobbe Fragomeni KO 7 Laszlo Hubert

Light Heavyweights

Bernard Hopkins W 12 Jean Pascal
(Regains World Title/Wins WBC Title)
Chad Dawson W 12 Adrian Diaconu
Nathan Cleverly KO 4 Aleksy Kuziemski
Karo Murat KO 11 Otis Griffin
Eduard Gutknecht KO 8 Danny McIntosh
Nicholson Poulard W 10 Frankie Santos
Roberto Bolonti W 10 Martin Islas
Andrzej Fonfara KO 7 Anthony Russell
Ismayl Sillakh KO 3 Hamza Wandera
Joel Casey KO 3 Komgrit Nanakorn
Anthony Dirrell KO 3 Alberto Mercedes
Marco Periban KO 2 Jose Clavero

Middleweights

Daniel Geale W 12 Sebastian Sylvester
Predrag Radosevic W 12 Jozsef Matolcsi
Darren Barker W 12 Domenico Spada
Andy Lee W 10 Alex Bunema
Billi Godoy Tech. Win 9 Claudio Abalos
Gogi Knezevic KO 7 Janos Varga
Elvin Ayala KO 4 George Armenta
Michel Trabant KO 3 Riccardo Grassmann

Junior Middleweights

Alfonso Gomez KO 2 Calvin Green
Sergey Rabchenko W 12 Bradley Pryce
Prince Arron KO 12 Sam Webb
Charlie Ota KO 9 Tadashi Yuba
Brian Rose KO 8 Martin Welsh

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Andre Ward W 12 Arthur Abraham
(Retains WBA Title)
Kelly Pavlik W 10 Alfonso Lopez
Aaron Pryor Jr. W 10 Librado Andrade
George Groves W 12 James DeGale
Andrea Di Luisa W 12 Ruben Acosta
Peter Quillin KO 3 Jesse Brinkley
Serge Yannick W 12 Shannan Taylor
Nikola Stevanovic KO 11 Stefano Castellucci
Julio Garcia W 10 Juan Rojas
Noe Gonzalez KO 9 Ruben Padilla
Denis Grachev KO 4 Vladine Biosse
Roberto Carlos De Titto KO 4 Camilo Altamirano
Kashif Mumtaz KO 1 Les Sherrington
Ricardo Ramallo KO 1 Anibal Barros
Shawn Estrada KO 1 Joe Gardner

CRASH LANDING
Super middleweight Shawn Estrada made easy work out of Joe Gardner, stopping him in the first round.

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA

Jonathan Gonzalez KO 7 Rudy Cisneros
Juan Carlos Candelo KO 7 Justin Flanagan
Carlos Molina KO 7 Allen Conyers
Roberto Garcia W 8 Calvin Odom
Alfonso Blanco W 4 Juan Carlos Diaz

Welterweights

Manny Pacquiao W 12 Shane Mosley
Frankie Gavin W 12 Young Mutley
Joel Julio W 10 Anges Adjaho
Kendall Holt KO 3 Julio Diaz
Sebastian Lujan W 10 Jorge Miranda
Jose Lopez W 10 Jorge Paez Jr
Kevin Bizier KO 5 Mauro Lucero
Frankie Gomez KO 1 Jason Davis
Sirimongkol Singwancha KO 3 Mohammad Suka
Sadam Ali W 8 John Revish
Tim Coleman W 8 Sergio Rivera
Chris Johnson KO 4 Neil Beevers

Junior Welterweights

Mike Alvarado KO 3 Ray Narh
Jose Benavidez KO 5 James Hope
Jose Alfaro KO 5 Eduardo Becerril
Nate Campbell W 8 Sherzod Nazarov

Lightweights

Sharif Bogere W 10 Raymundo Beltran
Dejan Zlaticanin KO 5 Hoang Nguyen
Edgar Riovalle KO 2 Arnoldo Pacheco
Juan Lencina W 10 Oscar Mutuverria
Karl Dargan W 6 Randy Arrellin
Andrey Klimov KO 3 Ty Barnett
Mahonri Montes KO 2 Rafael Urias
Thoy Keawsamrit KO 1 Saensak Sor Saksanya
Hylon Williams Jr. W 8 Marcos Herrera

Junior Lightweights

Miguel Roman KO 7 Hugo Salas
Fernando Trejo W 12 Arturo Gomez
Yaundale Evans KO 5 Ruslan Berchuk
Rodrigo Guerrero KO 4 Leopoldo Arrocha
Juan Martinez W 8 Bernabe Concepcion
Diego Magdaleno KO 3 Gilberto Leon
Alfonso Perez KO 2 Marco Lopez
Ronald Pontillas KO 1 Masao Nakamura
Ben Jones Tech. Win 8 Akaash Bhatia

Featherweights

Hiroshige Osawa W 12 Jonel Alibio
Javier Fortuna W 10 Hugo Gomez
Caril Herrera KO 3 Cristian Faccio

Junior Featherweights

Jorge Arce KO 12 Wilfredo Vazquez Jr.
Tomoki Kameda W 10 Nathan Bolcio
Alexander Bakhtin W 10 Jose Beranza
Jose Nieves W 12 Cuauhtemoc Vargas
Christopher Martin W 10 Charles Huerta
Ranel Suco W 10 Jovill Marayan
Sergio Sain KO 4 Hugo Toledo
Thangthong Kiattaweesuk KO 3 Richard Samosir
Jesse Magdaleno W 6 Jonathan Alcantara

Bantamweights

Hugo Ruiz W 12 Francisco Arce
Koki Kameda KO 11 Daniel Diaz
Jesus Galicia KO 11 Jesus Ruiz
Juan Rosas KO 6 John Molina
Felipe Orucuta KO 3 Julio David Roque Ler
Ratchasak Kokietgym KO 3 Alex Buckie
Zhanat Zhakiyanov KO 2 Benjamin Pitteloud

Junior Bantamweights

Cristian Mijares W 12 Carlos Rueda
(Retains IBF Title)
Tomas Rojas KO 11 Juan Jose Montes
(Retains WBC Title)
Oscar Ibarra KO 7 Juanito Rubillar
Ryo Akaho KO 5 Fred Mundraby
Petchbarngborn Sor Tanapinyo Tech. Win 8 Wandee Singwancha
Rodel Mayol W 10 Javier Gallo
Rey Perez W 12 Danilo Pena
Tepparith Singwancha W 12 Drian Francisco
Everth Briceno W 10 Darwin Zamora
Daniel Rosas KO 8 David Gaspar
Norasing Kokietgym KO 1 Ruben Manakane

Flyweights

Omar Soto KO 2 Valentin Leon
Panomroonglek Kaiyarn Hadaogym W 11 Jecker Buhawe
Angel Gimenez W 10 Leonardo Lemos
Harry Gutana KO 2 Ryan Tampus

Junior Flyweights

Ulises Solis W 12 Luis Lazarte
(Wins IBF Title)
Adrian Hernandez KO 11 Gilberto Keb Baas
(Wins WBC Title)
Ramon Hirales KO 4 Jesus Geles
Benezer Alolod W 10 Ruther Del Castillo
Naoko Shibata Tech. Win 9 Kayoko Ebata
Naomi Togashi KO 5 Jujeath Nagaowa

Strawweights

Juan Palacios W 12 Sammy Gutierrez
Raul Garcia KO 3 Rommel Asenjo
Jose Zuniga W 12 Ulises Lara
Naoko Fujioka KO 8 Anabel Ortiz
Joan Imperial KO 7 Michael Borja
Momo Koseki KO 5 Krikanok Islandmuaythai
Kanittha Kokietgym W 10 Nongmuay Kokietgym

RINGSIDE REPORTS

Compiled by Don Stewart

Andre Ward W 12 Arthur Abraham

Professionally speaking, not much has gone well for Abraham since March 27, 2010, when Andre Dirrell slipped to the canvas in the 11th round and Abraham, behind on points, knocked him unconscious with a thudding shot, ending the fight by disqualification. Dirrell, who suffered neurological damage, hasn't returned to the ring since.

In his next fight, Abraham was thoroughly dominated by Carl Froch. Somehow still alive in Showtime's "Super Six World Boxing Classic" tournament, he was dominated again and finally eliminated by methodical Olympian Ward, who'd already emerged as the tournament favorite. Abraham was in the fight at first, working with some dexterity behind his turtle defense, lashing out, and then covering up or tangling up in time to avoid retaliation.

The pride of Oakland, California, took over gradually, working behind his jab, which was the dominant punch of the fight. Too much speed, too much conditioning.

The outdoor Home Depot Center venue in Southern California wasn't as friendly to Ward as one might have expected. Just up the freeway in Glendale is the largest concentration of Armenians in the United States, and Armenian stalwarts, among the 5,311 in attendance, never stopped cheering for Abraham or shouting insults at Ward.

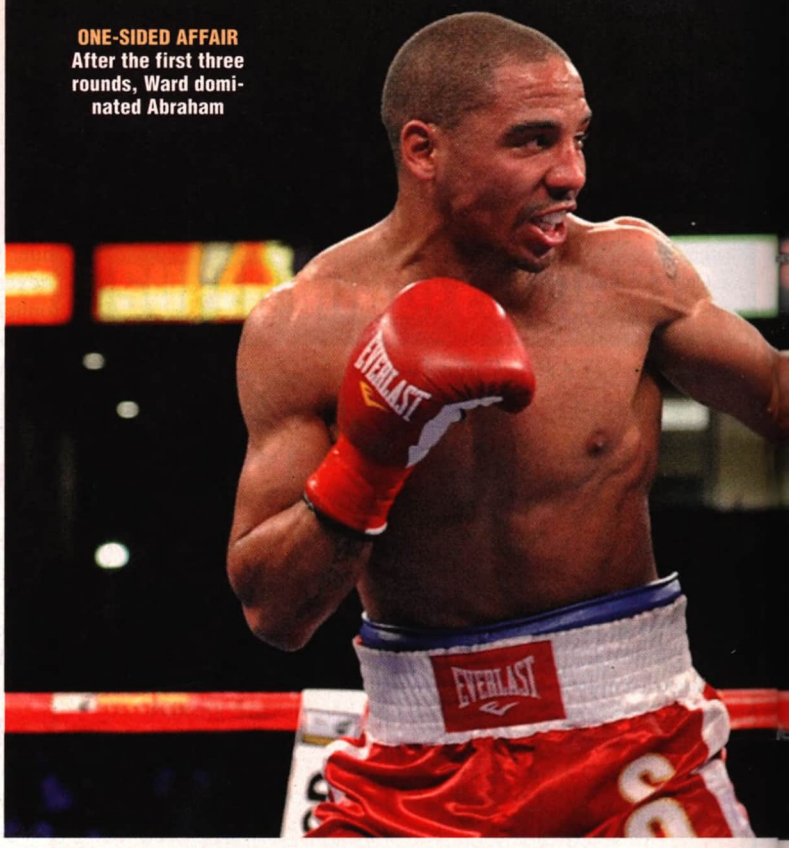
The way their styles matched up, the two combatants clinched repeatedly, and referee Luis Pabon jumped in to separate them with or without just cause. Ward said later that part of his fight plan had been to give Abraham trouble inside, but thanks to the referee flown in from Puerto Rico, he had to adjust his style.

As the fight wore on, Abraham threw fewer punches, his face bruised from a systematic thumping, while Ward never seemed to tire. Ward also found success occasionally switching to southpaw. Abraham admitted later he was looking for a knockout. Ward puts heft into his shots, but he's no knockout puncher. And neither man was ever staggered or in serious trouble of going down. Ward now advances to the final tournament bout against the winner of Froch-Glen Johnson.

The judges' scores: Stanley Christodoulou (South Africa), 120-108; Ingo Barrabas (Germany) 118-110, and Dr. James Jen Kin (USA) 118-111. THE RING scored it 117-111 for Ward.

For what it's worth, Ward made his third defense of the WBA belt he won by beating Mikkel Kessler in November 2009, during the opening round of the "Super Six."

Ivan Goldman



ONE-SIDED AFFAIR After the first three rounds, Ward dominated Abraham

Koki Kameda KO 11 Daniel Diaz

Kameda made the first defense of the bantamweight belt as he took the initiative from the outset, decked lanky Nicaraguan challenger Diaz in the eighth, and finally stopped him at the end of the 11th round at Prefectural Gymnasium.

Despite being taller by three inches and sporting a three-inch reach advantage, the lanky Diaz wasn't much of a nuisance for Kameda, who acquired the vacant WBA 118-pound belt by defeating Alexander Munoz on points last December. The Nicaraguan was simply slower than Kameda, who got inside at will and seemed to land southpaw combinations whenever he wished. Diaz occasionally responded to Kameda's attack with sickle-like uppercuts that sometimes found their mark but lacked sufficient power to hurt Kameda.

The 24-year-old beltholder started cautiously in the opening session but quickly realized he was faster than the skinny challenger, who hadn't fought since April 2010. Kameda used his more accurate combinations to steadily pile up points with ease. The fourth round saw Diaz sustain a gash over the left eyebrow, courtesy of an accidental butt, though Kameda claimed that it was opened by his legal punches.

A more aggressive Diaz let loose in round seven. He continually punched the much shorter Kameda with right uppercuts to the face, but Kameda shook off the shots and retaliated with some combinations of his own in the closing seconds of the round. In the eighth, an unfazed Kameda floored Diaz with a left. Fully in command in the ninth and 10th, Kameda went for the finish with a flurry of punches in the 11th, but Diaz gamely withstood the barrages and reached the end of the round.

After the 11th, however, Diaz' corner signaled that their fighter had surrendered on his stool, and referee Mark Nelson raised Kameda's hand.

The official tallies before the stoppage were as follows: Levi Martinez (USA) 108-100, and Tom Miller (USA) and Dave Parris (England) both had 107-101, all in favor of Kameda, the former 112-pound titlist who skipped the 115-pound class to pick up his second belt.

"I was born here in Osaka, from which I'd like to deliver my encouragement to people that suffered a tragic disaster," said Kameda, referring to the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that rocked the island nation.

Joe Koizumi

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA

MATCH STATS

Division: Super Middleweight • **Location:** Carson, CA
Date: May 14, 2011 • **Television:** Showtime
Promoters: Goossen Tutor Promotions, Sauerland Event
Referee: Luis Pabon (Puerto Rico)

Andre Ward	Arthur Abraham
Age: 27 • **Weight:** 168	**Age:** 30 • **Weight:** 167
Residence: Oakland, California	**Residence:** Berlin, Germany
Birthplace: San Francisco, California	**Birthplace:** Yerevan, Armenia
Record: 24-0 (13)	**Record:** 32-3 (26)
Ring Ranking: 1	**Ring Ranking:** 8

MATCH STATS

Division: Bantamweight • **Location:** Osaka, Japan
Date: May 7, 2011 • **Promoter:** Kameda Promotions
Referee: Mark Nelson (USA)

Koki Kameda	Daniel Diaz
Age: 24 • **Weight:** 118	**Age:** 27 • **Weight:** 117¼
Residence: Tokyo, Japan	**Residence:** Managua, Nicaragua
Birthplace: Osaka, Japan	**Birthplace:** Jinotega, Nicaragua
Record: 25-1 (16)	**Record:** 18-3 (13)
Ring Ranking: 9	

PHOTO BY JIJI PRESS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

KOKI TKO
Kameda lands a left en route to stopping Diaz

Chris Arreola KO 3 Nagy Aguilera

The big news took place the day before the match when Arreola weighed in at a slimmed down 234. The affable binge eater, who has freely admitted to poor self-control and sporadic training habits, hadn't made it down to such svelte territory since July 14, 2007, when he came in at 234 against Derek Berry. Mostly he's been showing up in the fleshy 250s and hit a whopping 263 in December 2009 against Brian Minto.

Aguilera, looking for his big break, came to fight, but only in spots. Arreola came out a little tight in the first round, but then he poured it on, throwing punches in bunches and repeatedly cornering his opponent against the ropes, not allowing him to follow his fight plan. Arreola threw good clean shots, as did his opponent, mixing his combinations and showing no mercy. The crowd loved it.

In the third round, Aguilera, quickly caught on the ropes again, tried to counterpunch at first, but Arreola wouldn't be denied. With a variety of hard shots raining down on a beaten down Aguilera, referee Raul Caiz Jr. waved it off at the 1:15 mark of the round.

Arreola, who recently married and hit the sometimes-jarring age of 30, said he lost the weight without hiring a nutritionist-personal trainer. He's looking to become a significant factor in the heavyweight division again. His only two losses came in his two most important contests—against Vitali Klitschko and Tomasz Adamek. He was north of 250 in both fights. He and Eddie Chambers are the only American heavyweights ranked in THE RING top 10. Both are promoted by Goossen Tutor.

The fight was the untelevised co-feature to the Andre Ward-Arthur Abraham super middleweight bout at the Home Depot Center.

Ivan Goldman

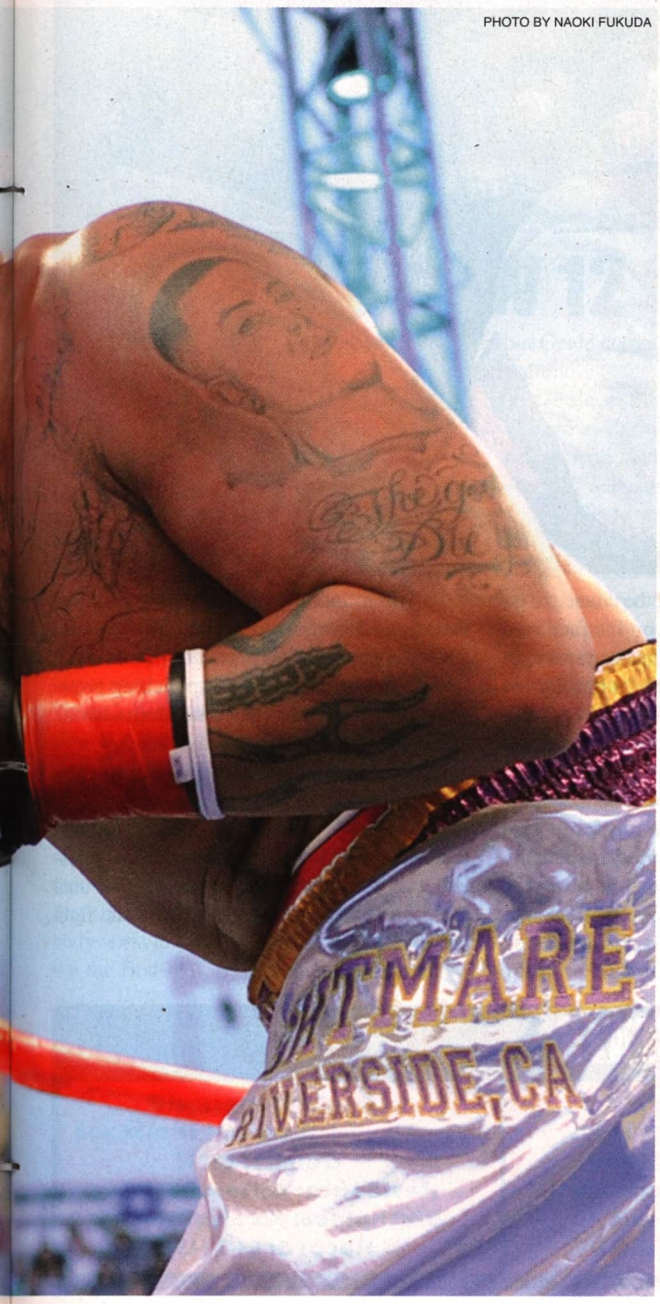
ON THE ROPES
Arreola made quick work of outclassed Aguilera

MATCH STATS

Division: Heavyweight • **Location:** Carson, CA
Date: May 14, 2011
Promoters: Goossen Tutor Promotions, Sauerland Event
Referee: Raul Caiz Jr. (California)

Chris Arreola	Nagy Aguilera
Age: 30 • **Weight:** 234	**Age:** 24 • Weight: 238
Residence: Escondido, CA	**Residence:** Newburgh, NY
Birthplace: Los Angeles, CA	**Birthplace:** La Romana, Dominican Republic
Record: 31-2 (27)	**Record:** 16-6 (11)
Ring Ranking: 10	

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA



Raul Garcia KO 3 Rommel Asenjo

In the first defense of his second reign as a 105-pound titlist, Mexican lefty "Rayito" Garcia impressively dispatched Filipino southpaw Asenjo in three rounds at the Foro Polanco. Asenjo, who came into the fight with a 15-fight win streak and the Oriental belt around his waist, had no answers for Garcia's experience, volume, and pinpoint counters.

Garcia seized the initiative by raking the challenger with jabs and three-punch bursts while Asenjo stalked behind looping lefts. Garcia mixed his punches nicely as he planted a left to the ribs, a right-left to the chin, and hooked off a missed jab. Asenjo's high guard deflected some of Rayito's numerous punches, but not enough as Garcia's activity easily won him the session.

Twenty-five seconds into the second, Garcia spun off the ropes and stunned Asenjo with a left to the face. Garcia charged in with all guns blazing, but he slowed once he sensed Asenjo's recovery. Still, Garcia's continuous punching kept the man known as "My Little Assassin" on defense, though he got in a double jab-left to the body combo near the two-minute mark.

Asenjo then enjoyed his best offensive sequence by landing several solid bodyshots and a jolting left uppercut to the chin, but Garcia quickly regained control with a right-left to the body followed by the same to the face.

Garcia opened the third by putting more mustard behind each blow, accelerating every time he sensed weakness. With 1:05 remaining—just as the challenger launched a left that eventually connected—Garcia stepped in with a short, direct left to the cheek that drove Asenjo to a knee. Up at two, Asenjo drew in a deep breath before preparing for a follow-up attack, but the titleholder continued to pound away at long range.

Just when it appeared Asenjo would survive the round, Garcia lashed out with a right-left and a sweeping right hook to the temple that caused Asenjo to wobble back into the ropes and prompted referee Raul Caiz Sr. to jump in at the 2:52 mark.

Garcia's victory capped a historic night for the family. Earlier on the card, twin brother Ramon won the WBO junior flyweight belt by stopping Jesus Geles in four, avenging a split-decision defeat two-and-a-half months earlier in Geles' native Colombia.

MATCH STATS

Division: Strawweight
Location: Mexico City, Mexico
Date: April 30, 2011
Television: Fox Deportes
Promoters: Zanfer Promotions, Top Rank
Referee: Raul Caiz Sr. (USA)

Raul Garcia
Age: 28 • **Weight:** 105
Residence: La Paz, Mexico
Hometown: La Paz, Mexico
Record: 30-1-1 (18)
Ring Ranking: 4

Rommel Asenjo
Age: 21 • **Weight:** 105
Residence: Pigkawayan, Philippines
Hometown: Pigkawayan, Philippines
Record: 20-3 (16)

Evander Holyfield KO 11 Brian Nielsen

"It's an old man's fight; for sure," acknowledged Nielsen beforehand, "but we can still fight better than most and still put on a good show."

Mostly through goodwill, Nielsen was correct enough in both assessments. It was a fair fight, a decent show, and the still-popular plodder set a proper tone for the event when he mooned an appreciative weigh-in crowd. Nielsen clowned his way through the engagement at the Koncerthuset, but he took legitimate punishment with impressive good nature.

It seemed incredible that well-worn Nielsen is younger than Holyfield, who took a baby step in his Sisyphean quest. At this point, maybe any step matters.

Commendably, the "legends" promotional designation signaled senior status and offered little false promise. Holyfield looked much better than in his January fiasco against Sherman Williams but far faded from his '08 effort versus Nikolay Valuev.

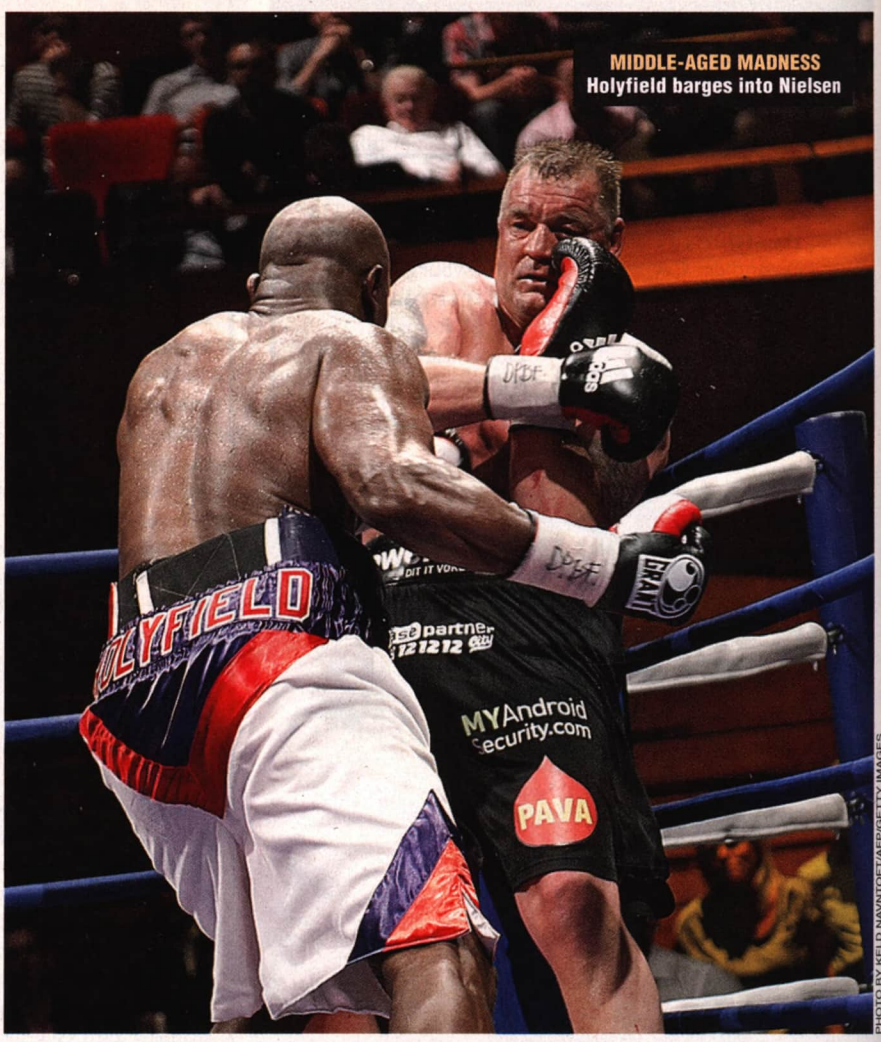
Holyfield dropped Nielsen in the third and dominated throughout. Despite a casual comeback attitude and nine-year retiree status, Nielsen was reasonably ready and left with more facial damage than many fighters would have endured.

If a relaxed demeanor meant as much in this sport as crunching hooks, Nielsen would see Hall of Fame induction, not Holyfield. Nielsen walked cheerfully into multi-punch combination after combination.

Holyfield moved backward on his toes as Nielsen followed feebly, behind a fair left jab. Holyfield moved to his right, planted, and threw. Occasionally, Nielsen came over with responding rights. For as flabby as he looked, Nielsen boxed fairly well.

Holyfield bumped Nielsen into a corner and pounded him into a wrinkled shell. Most of the punches were either catching the strands or the back of squatting Nielsen's neck when the ref jumped in at 2:49 of the 11th round.

Bleeding from the corner of his right eye, Nielsen grimaced in protest and moved forward to show he could continue. He was steady as ever, if you could call it that, and probably could have made it through the handful of minutes remaining.



MIDDLE-AGED MADNESS
Holyfield barges into Nielsen

PHOTO BY KELD NAVNTOFT/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Perhaps Nielsen deserved the chance to go the distance, but the lumps on his face said he'd already taken enough punches years ago.

"This ending was unjust," complained Nielsen. "He butted me. If stopped earlier, I couldn't argue, but I almost made it to the last round."

"This showed what I can do and taught me I've still got to get better to reach my goal again," admitted Holyfield. Holyfield's only prayer is beating a known but untested European prospect then hope a Klitschko brother, David Haye, or Tomasz Adamek wants a walkover.

If you're talking vibrant venue, a packed well-heeled swarm with goddess-type card girls and primo video production, this was a first-class event. In terms of punching prowess, it was barely fringe-contender material. Still, it was no disgrace by any means.

Maybe the thing to consider at this point is how Holyfield might end up as a marquee performer for 30 years in a very unforgiving trade. Holyfield is indeed headed for Canastota, but, at this rate, he won't be eligible until after 2020. Considering longevity, the fight becomes less ridiculous.

That's no easy road.

MATCH STATS

	Evander Holyfield	Brian Nielsen
Division: Heavyweight	**Age:** 48	**Age:** 46
Location: Copenhagen, Denmark	**Weight:** 226	**Weight:** 238
Date: May 7, 2011	**Residence:** Atlanta, GA	**Residence:** Korsoer, Denmark
Promoter: Sauerland Event	**Birthplace:** Atmore, AL	**Birthplace:** Korsoer, Denmark
Referee: Fabian Guggenheim (Switzerland)	**Record:** 44-10-2 (29)	**Record:** 64-3 (43)

TITLE CHANGE
Geale (left) took the IBF strap away from Sylvester

PHOTO BY BORIS STREUBEL/GETTY IMAGES

Daniel Geale W 12 Sebastian Sylvester

So much for hometown decisions, international style.

Geale swarmed into Sylvester's backyard and stayed in the local hero's reddening face frequently enough to capture a close-but-clear split decision, despite Germany's reputation as Europe's version of Las Vegas for allegedly biased scorecards.

Geale also picked up the IBF belt, which Sylvester was defending for the fourth time.

The Australian was immediately busier with initial jabs that didn't mean much during tentative opening moments. Still, the visitor's consistent output made an impression. Sebastian kept his gloves up in a peek-a-boo style as he measured the range for counter rights.

The contest quickly developed into an action-packed affair. The bumps on Sebastian's face showed that Geale's jab was getting through. Each man did plenty of good bodywork, and the fight was deadlocked during the first half. Sylvester looked stronger, but Geale earned crucial points for punching volume.

Geale established a more dominant rhythm as the two traded up and down, but neither man landed many clean, jarring blasts upstairs. Sebastian's right eye started to look tender. Geale was busier, but Sebastian was more accurate in a continuing pattern. Geale got on his toes whenever Sebastian went into stalker mode.

Except for a moment when the fighters tumbled to the canvas, ref Randy Neumann could have read a book for as little as he had to do while the boxers traded shots in textbook fashion until they got sloppy during a frantic finale.

Geale, whose only loss was to countryman Anthony Mundine in 2009, looked understandably nervous during the extended scorecard tally, but his fears were unfounded. The full house at Jahnsportforum, where Sebastian has appeared six times, seemed to approve of the decision and the action, though there were more than a few derogatory whistles at the end. Steve Epstein (USA) scored it 118-110 and Marcus McDonnell (England) had it 118-112, both for Geale, while Berit Andreasen (Denmark) saw a far different fight at 118-110 Sylvester. It was one of those cases where the fighters' faces told the story before the winner was announced.

"I knew I had to work hard and keep the pressure on," Geale said. "I have to thank Sylvester and his people for giving me the opportunity and for how good they treated me."

It may be hard to fathom how such widespread verdicts could be completely, conversely competent, but it was just that type of battle. More than a few frames were virtual coin flips, depending on your preference of styles. Geale finished many exchanges with more punches, but Sebastian always kept it close.

"He scored more and deserved to win," Sylvester admitted. "I was not prepared for his style."

MATCH STATS

Division: Middleweight
Location: Neubrandenburg, Germany
Date: May 7, 2011
Promoter: Sauerland Event
Referee: Randy Neumann (USA)

Daniel Geale
Age: 30 • **Weight:** 159¾
Residence: Mt. Annan, Australia
Birthplace: Launceston, Australia
Record: 25-1 (15)
Ring Ranking: 2

Sebastian Sylvester
Age: 30 • **Weight:** 159
Residence: Greifswald, Germany
Birthplace: Greifswald, Germany
Record: 34-4-1 (16)
Ring Ranking: 4

Peter Quillin KO 3 Peter Brinkley

MATCH STATS

Division: Super Middleweight • **Location:** Reno, NV • **Date:** April 29, 2011
Television: Telefutura • **Promoter:** Golden Boy Promotions
Referee: Joe Cortez (New York)

Peter Quillin	Jesse Brinkley
Age: 27	**Age:** 34
Weight: 165½	**Weight:** 166½
Residence: Brooklyn, NY	**Residence:** Yerington, NV
Birthplace: Grand Rapids, MI	**Birthplace:** Yerington, NV
Record: 24-0 (18)	**Record:** 35-7 (4)

Over a year ago, Peter Quillin made an important career decision.

Having been on the shelf for 18 months with various injuries and with his career losing momentum fast, Quillin packed his bags and moved from Brooklyn, New York, to Los Angeles, California, and signed with Golden Boy Promotions. He also made the jump to the world-renowned Wild Card Gym, training under the guidance of Freddie Roach and Eric Brown.

The move seems to be paying dividends. In a super middleweight bout, "Kid Chocolate" Quillin got back on track, stopping Jesse Brinkley of *The Contender* fame inside three rounds.

It was apparent from the closing of the first round that this fight wouldn't end well for Brinkley. Quillin buzzed him with the first punch he landed of consequence, an overhand right with more than a minute left in the opening stanza that badly staggered Brinkley, sending him stumbling into the far corner.

Quillin jumped on him, sizing his prey up and trying to close the show as Brinkley dipped and dodged. The veteran Brinkley eventually punched his way off the ropes and survived the round.

Brinkley, fighting before his hometown fans at the Reno Events Center, fared much better in the second round. He won some exchanges and landed some nice combos, and the crowd began to get behind him.

Quillin was content to box calmly throughout the round, as to not punch himself out. Brinkley, meanwhile, still appeared to be on shaky legs.

In the third, Quillin again landed a big overhand right, but, this time, he finished Brinkley, following his staggered opponent around the ring and attacking. He continued to chase and continued to land as Brinkley covered up and offered no resistance, forcing referee Joe Cortez to jump in and stop the action at the 2:34 mark of the round.

It was an impressive win for Kid Chocolate, considering Brinkley lasted nine rounds with THE RING number-two super middleweight Lucian Bute in his previous fight. Quillin displayed accurate counterpunching and great range throughout the short contest.

"I hurt him in the first round but didn't go in for the kill. I relaxed and took my shots, realizing I could hit him again at any time," Cuban-American Quillin said. "I hit him with a lot of hard, accurate shots.

"I didn't want to risk trying to finish him off then. I was in the biggest fight of my career and just did what was natural."

Quillin intends to campaign at middleweight following perhaps the biggest win of his career, where he could find himself on the short list to challenge world champion Sergio Martinez.

Vic Darchinyan KO 5 Yonnhy Perez

This night wasn't awful, but it was far from the spectacular one it figured to be. The two fights at the top of the card were supposed to wrap up the excellent-so-far Showtime bantamweight tournament, with Joseph Agbeko and Abner Mares vying for the top prize and Darchinyan and Perez duking it out for the consolation spot. But Agbeko dropped out after suffering a sciatic injury following a long plane ride, and no substitute opponent could be found in time for Mares. A bummer for both camps. They went through all the training and picked up no purses. A bummer for the fans as well because there seemed no way Agbeko-Mares could have disappointed.

As it turned out, the new headliner featured a worn-out Perez going through the motions against a determined Darchinyan. The Australian by way of Armenia was clearly eager to climb back to where his hefty ego figures he belongs and where his crushing left hand could rule once again. The card was set on the stage of the Nokia Theatre, an auditorium ill suited for boxing. Many of the approximately 3,000 fans had poor sight angles.

Perez did little in the first round, and eventually it seemed pretty clear nothing would change in this fight. It was only a matter of time. Perez didn't run. He was willing to *take* the punishment but strangely unequal to dishing it out as though he meant it.

Darchinyan boxed well, setting up his big left with care. As time went on, he also landed some hellacious bodyshots. In round two, with their feet tangled, Perez went down, and referee Jerry Cantu ruled it a knockdown. By the fifth round, Darchinyan, less careful, went to his customary crouch, both hands down, a pose he takes when he's lost respect for his opponent and is just looking for that one big punch.

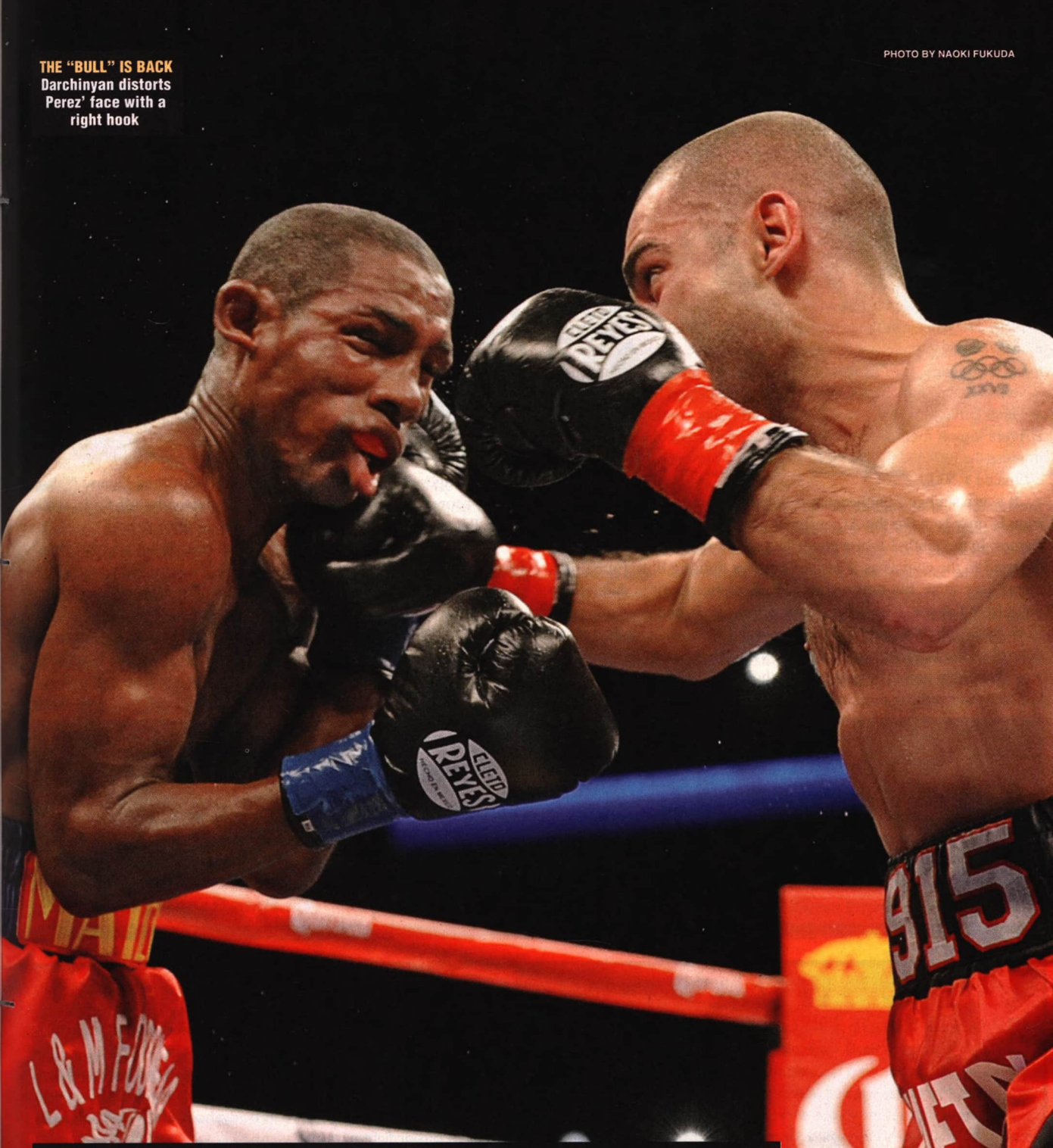
In the fifth round, southpaw Darchinyan, the shorter man, got the best of an accidental clash of heads against the orthodox Perez. Blood flowed freely from a cut near the bridge of the nose, and fight physician Dr. Paul Wallace said a blood vessel was cut, pumping blood directly into the eye. That meant they would go to the scorecards, and judges Marty Denkin (California), Max DeLuca (California), and Jerry Roth (Nevada) all had it 50-44 for Darchinyan in a fight that was very easy to score.

Gary Shaw, who promotes both fighters, said Perez' four previous fights had been hard-fought wars. Ominously, he said little about Perez' future.

Shaw immediately began angling for a Darchinyan-Mares rematch. It was hard to say what all this meant for the tournament. Much depended on Agbeko's health. Shaw claimed Nonito Donaire was "on ice" because of a promotional dispute between Top Rank and Golden Boy. Clearly, Shaw wasn't eager to put Darchinyan in against quick, hard-punching Donaire, who stopped the "Raging Bull" in the fifth round in July 2007.

"I will show how strong I am at 122 and 126 too," said Darchinyan. The word "retirement" doesn't appear to be in his vocabulary.

Ivan Goldman



THE "BULL" IS BACK
Darchinyan distorts Perez' face with a right hook

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA

MATCH STATS

Division: Bantamweight • **Location:** Los Angeles, CA • **Date:** April 23, 2011
Television: Showtime • **Promoters:** Don King Productions, Gary Shaw Productions, Golden Boy Promotions, Thompson Boxing Promotions • **Referee:** Jerry Cantu (USA)

Vic Darchinyan	Yonnhy Perez
Age: 35 • **Weight:** 117¾	**Age:** 32 • **Weight:** 117¾
Residence: Sydney, Australia	**Residence:** Santa Fe Springs, CA
Birthplace: Vanadzor, Armenia	**Birthplace:** Cartanega, Colombia
Record: 36-3-1 (27)	**Record:** 20-2-1 (14)
Ring Ranking: 6	**Ring Ranking:** 8

Ulises Solis W 12 Luis Lazarte

Solis was in the dressing room at Once Unidos Club, reflecting on his victory minutes beforehand against the veteran junior flyweight beltholder Lazarte. "I have never been in doubt about my performance," Solis said. "I know I was the winner. Lazarte is strong and has a lot of stamina. He's a great champion, but I was the winner."

Suddenly, Lazarte appeared on the scene. "I just came by to say, 'Hello, Solis, and congratulations,'" Lazarte said. "He is a real boxer and a true champion. I think the bout was very close but … You know, this is boxing, and this is life. Congratulations, champ." Solis replied: "Tonight was a hard fight and you deserve a rematch. Congratulations to you."

Last December, at the same venue, Solis and Lazarte fought to a majority draw. But nearly everyone in attendance felt Solis deserved the decision, and, for this reason, the IBF ordered a rematch. Osvaldo Rivero won the chance to promote the return bout, and it was held again at Once Unidos, where a tremendous and noisy contingent of Truck Drivers Union members (Lazarte works as a street cleaner) tried to impress the jury and the Mexican challenger. The crowd numbered an estimated 1,500.

It was a strange fight because Solis looked impressive in the early rounds only to have the Argentinean take command in the middle frames. In the ninth, Lazarte connected with a rabbit punch, and Solis dropped to the canvas as if he was hit by a lighting bolt. Embellishment? Of course, but referee Benjy Esteves Jr. saw fit to deduct one point from Lazarte. (For good measure, Esteves Jr. deducted one point from Solis' tally for grabbing Lazarte in the 10th.) Lazarte had taken control of the bout, but on THE RING's unofficial card, the Mexican was ahead two points entering the 11th. Lazarte clearly won the two last rounds, resulting in a draw (115-115) on THE RING card.

REMATCH REVENGE
Solis (left) edges Larzarte in Argentina

The judges disagreed. Steven Weisfeld (USA) and Denny Nelson (USA) scored it 116-111 and 115-112, respectively, for Solis, while Jorge Tripodi (Chile) scored it 114-113 for Lazarte.

"I lost in the first bout, but, in this one, everything was different," Lazarte said. "I have not lost this bout. I think the jury came with instructions."

With the win, Solis regained the belt he held from January 2006 until April 2009, when he was stopped by Brian Viloria. Lazarte, who won the belt by outpointing Carlos Tamara in May 2010, was attempting to make his third defense.

Carlos Irusta

MATCH STATS

	Ulises Solis	Luis Lazarte
Division: Junior Flyweight	**Age:** 29 • **Weight:** 108	**Age:** 40 • **Weight:** 108
Location: Mar del Plata, Argentina	**Residence:** Gualadajara, Mexico	**Residence:** Mar del Plata, Argentina
Date: April 30, 2011	**Birthplace:** Guadalajara, Mexico	**Birthplace:** Mar del Plata, Argentina
Promoter: Osvaldo Rivero	**Record:** 33-2-3 (21)	**Record:** 48-10-2 (18)
Referee: Benjy Esteves Jr. (USA)	**RING Ranking:** 6	**RING Ranking:** 9

Kelly Pavlik W 12 Alfonso Lopez

In the week leading up to his long-awaited return, former middleweight champion Pavlik was talking about making a statement following his battles with booze and losses to Bernard Hopkins and Sergio Martinez. Against undefeated—and virtually unknown—Texan Lopez, questions about a return to boxing's upper echelon remain for Pavlik, who struggled for a somewhat ugly decision on the Manny Pacquiao-Shane Mosley undercard at the MGM Grand.

Sporting several more tattoos than in his last fight, Pavlik showed rust in the first round while Lopez came on strong, landing a big left hook. Making use of the entire ring, Lopez moved, jabbed, and countered Pavlik throughout the second.

In the third, Pavlik closed the distance, going to the body and connecting with his big right. Lopez regained momentum in the fourth and fifth when he connected with bodyshots and hooks and was clearly the busier fighter.

From the sixth on, Pavlik took back the fight while Lopez slowed, fighting defensively. Big rights landed in the sixth for "The Ghost." In the seventh, a low blow by Pavlik halted the former

MATCH STATS

	Kelly Pavlik	Alfonso Lopez
Division: Super Middleweight	**Age:** 29 • **Weight:** 170	**Age:** 29 • **Weight:** 169
Location: Las Vegas, NV • **Date:** May 7, 2011	**Residence:** Youngstown, OH	**Residence:** Cut And Shoot, TX
Television: Pay-Per-View	**Birthplace:** Youngstown, OH	**Birthplace:** Corpus Christi, TX
Promoter: Top Rank	**Record:** 37-2 (36)	**Record:** 21-1 (16)
Referee: Russell Mora (Nevada)		

Adrian Hernandez KO 10 Gilberto Keb Baas

Cinderella beltholder Keb Baas made a spirited effort to keep his 108-pound strap against previous conqueror Hernandez, but the relentless younger challenger proved to be too much as "The Confessor" took the WBC trinket at the Coliseo de la Feria de Texcoco.

Hernandez had stopped Keb Baas in four rounds in March 2008, back when Keb Baas was in the midst of a seven-fight winless streak. Keb Baas dramatically rejuvenated his career last year, when he stunned Omar Nino via majority decision to win the belt. This was his second defense.

Keb Baas gave up 5½" in height and eight inches in reach to Hernandez, who nonetheless went after his shorter opponent. The result was a fight that was mostly waged at close range, with few clinches and few backward steps. Keb Baas seemed to get the better of it in the early rounds, when he answered Hernandez' aggression with an even heavier pace. His combinations were finding their mark, as evidenced by Hernandez' bloody nose.

The WBC's open scoring showed that two judges had it even (37-37, 38-38), and a third had Keb Baas ahead 38-37 after four rounds. Seemingly angered by those scores, Hernandez picked up the pace. Jabbing his way in, he began to land his right hand more frequently and effectively. Keb Baas fought back valiantly, but he began to wear down as Hernandez increasingly dominated.

Keb Baas' eyes were swelling by the eighth, when Hernandez pelted him with right hands along the ropes and had referee Jerry Cantu on the verge of stopping it. The open scoring showed Hernandez ahead 78-74, 77-75, and even at 76-76 after eight rounds. Keb Baas fared better in the ninth, when he did some effective work to the body, but Hernandez was pounding him again in the 10th. Cantu docked Keb Baas a point in the round for a low blow.

BAAS FISHING
Hernandez jolts Keb Baas with a right

PHOTO BY HECTOR VIVAS/LATIN CONTENT/GETTY IMAGES

Before the 11th, ringside physician Dr. Francisco Daza examined Keb Baas and recommended that Cantu stop it. Cantu complied, sending the Keb Baas corner into a frenzy. Though Keb Baas was never down and always punched back, it was a wise stoppage as Keb Baas likely would have just absorbed more punishment. Still, Keb Baas' team demanded a rematch. Hernandez was reportedly ready to grant their wishes later this year after a voluntary defense this summer.

It was Hernandez' eighth-straight win since a sixth-round stoppage loss to Oscar Ibarra in July 2008. For Keb Baas, the loss ended an eight-bout unbeaten streak.

MATCH STATS

Division: Junior Flyweight
Location: Texcoco, Mexico
Date: April 30, 2011
Promoters: Golden Boy Promotions, Grupo Publica, Pepe Gomez
Referee: Jerry Cantu (USA)

Adrian Hernandez
Age: 22 • **Weight:** 106
Residence: Toluca, Mexico
Birthplace: Toluca, Mexico
Record: 21-1-1 (13)
Ring Ranking: 1

Gilberto Keb Baas
Age: 33 • **Weight:** 108
Residence: Merida, Mexico
Birthplace: Hunucma, Mexico
Record: 35-21-4 (22)
Ring Ranking: 2

champ's momentum, but, in round eight, bodyshots further slowed Lopez.

Lopez was the aggressor in the ninth while Pavlik struggled to find range for his right hand. Bleeding from a cut above his eye caused by an accidental headbutt, Pavlik tried to close the show in the final round, but Lopez tied up at every opportunity.

Two of the three Nevada judges clearly saw Pavlik the winner, scoring it 98-92 (Richard Houck) and 99-91 (C.J. Ross), while the third had it even at 95-95 (Adalaide Byrd).

"I didn't fight quite like I wanted to do," Pavlik admitted. "But we won the fight against a tough, durable kid. The rust wasn't as bad as I thought it would be, but the timing was off. It took a while to get going, but I got the W."

Pavlik is hoping to continue the comeback this summer. The Rust Belt hero might need to shake off some more rust, however, before he can contend with the elite of the super middleweight class.

"I think I deserved the draw," Lopez said. "I connected with more shots than he did."

Chris Cozzone

PHOTO BY CHRIS TROTMAN/GETTY IMAGES

ROCKY RETURN
Pavlik struggled to win a majority decision over Lopez

POR LOS QUE SE ATREVEN A SUBIR AL RING

CON CARÁCTER

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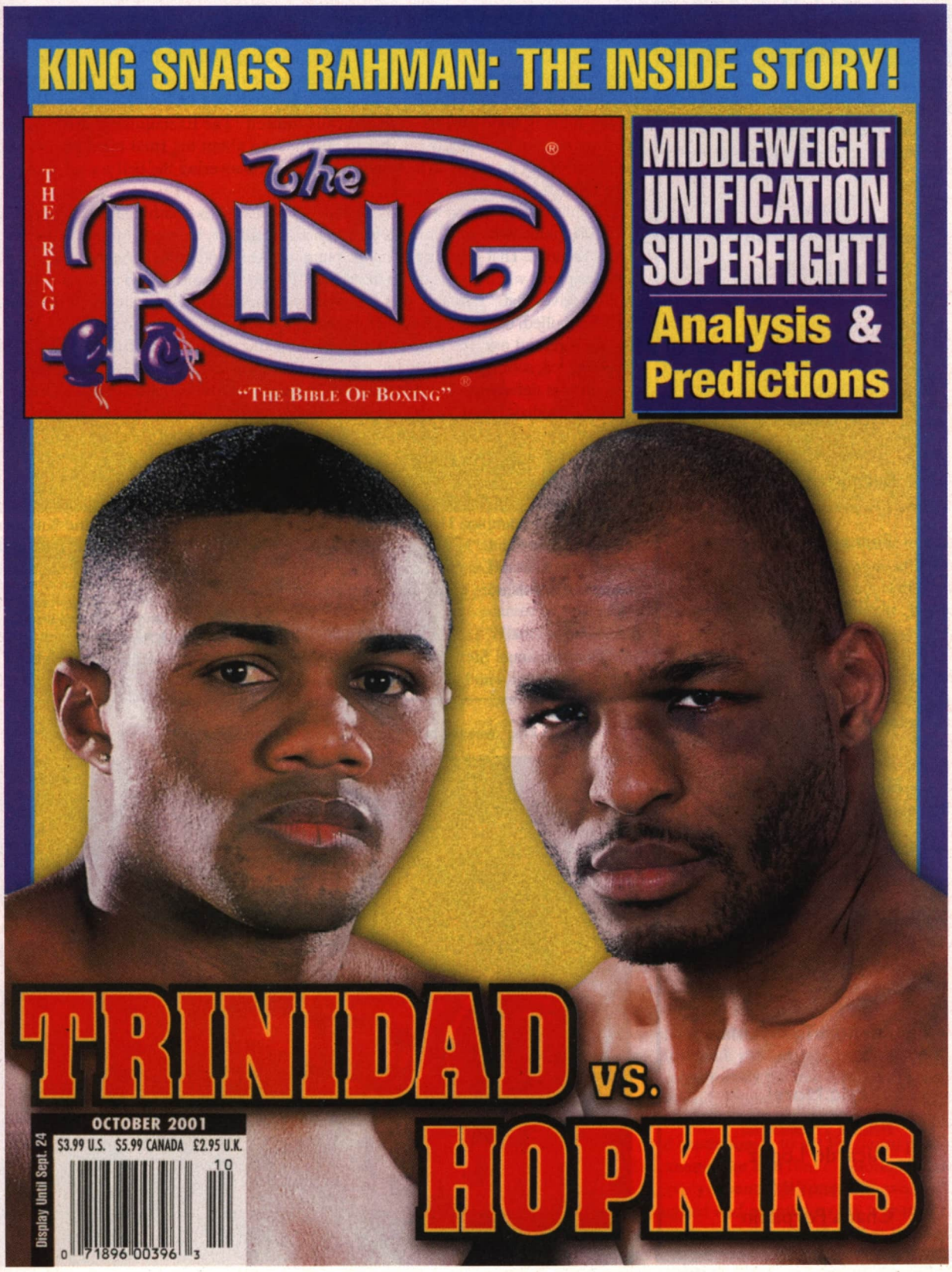
October 2001



WORLD CHAMPIONS

For the period ended June 5, 2001

(THE RING did not have a championship policy in 2001, so the fighters listed below in each weight division are THE RING's number-one contenders for the period ended June 5, 2001)

Heavyweight
Hasim Rahman

Cruiserweight
Juan Carlos Gomez

Light Heavyweight
Roy Jones

Super Middleweight
Joe Calzaghe

Middleweight:
Bernard Hopkins

Junior Middleweight
Fernando Vargas

Welterweight
Shane Mosley

Junior Welterweight
Kostya Tszyu

Lightweight
Jose Luis Castillo

Junior Lightweight
Floyd Mayweather

Featherweight
Marco Antonio Barrera

Junior Featherweight
Bones Adams

Bantamweight
Tim Austin

Junior Bantamweight
Masamori Tokuyama

Flyweight
Eric Morel

Junior Flyweight
Ricardo Lopez

Strawweight
Chana Porpaoin

COVER STORY: "Trinidad vs. Hopkins, The Biggest Middleweight Fight Since Leonard-Hagler," by Nigel Collins examines the significance of the first middleweight unification bout since Sugar Ray Leonard upset Marvelous Marvin Hagler in 1987. The winner would join the pantheon of 160-pound greats: Stanley Ketchel, Harry Greb, Mickey Walker, Ray Robinson, and Carlos Monzon. Not only that, but the winner would be awarded THE RING middleweight championship belt and the Sugar Ray Robinson trophy, a concoction stirred up by Don King, the promoter of the middleweight championship tournament.

There was just one large caveat that was looming, noted Collins, "If anything is missing from the Trinidad-Hopkins bout, it's the sense that it might not be as competitive as some of the great middleweight wars of yesteryear. Even thought Hopkins wears a menacing-looking hood into the ring and calls himself 'The Executioner,' there's a general feeling that *he's* the one who should be thinking about his final meal and wondering whether or not he wants to be blindfolded before answering the bell for the most important fight of his career."

Collins' apprehension was duly shared. "Tito" had been smashing through opponents to reach Hopkins, who said something prophetic to Collins before the fight, "You don't run from Trinidad. That gets his adrenaline pumping. Me, I like to fight on the inside. Let's see what happens when I get right up in his face. I'm going to turn it into an alley fight and see who survives that." The story was followed by a selection of experts pick. Of the 20 boxing insiders polled, only five thought Hopkins had any chance of winning.

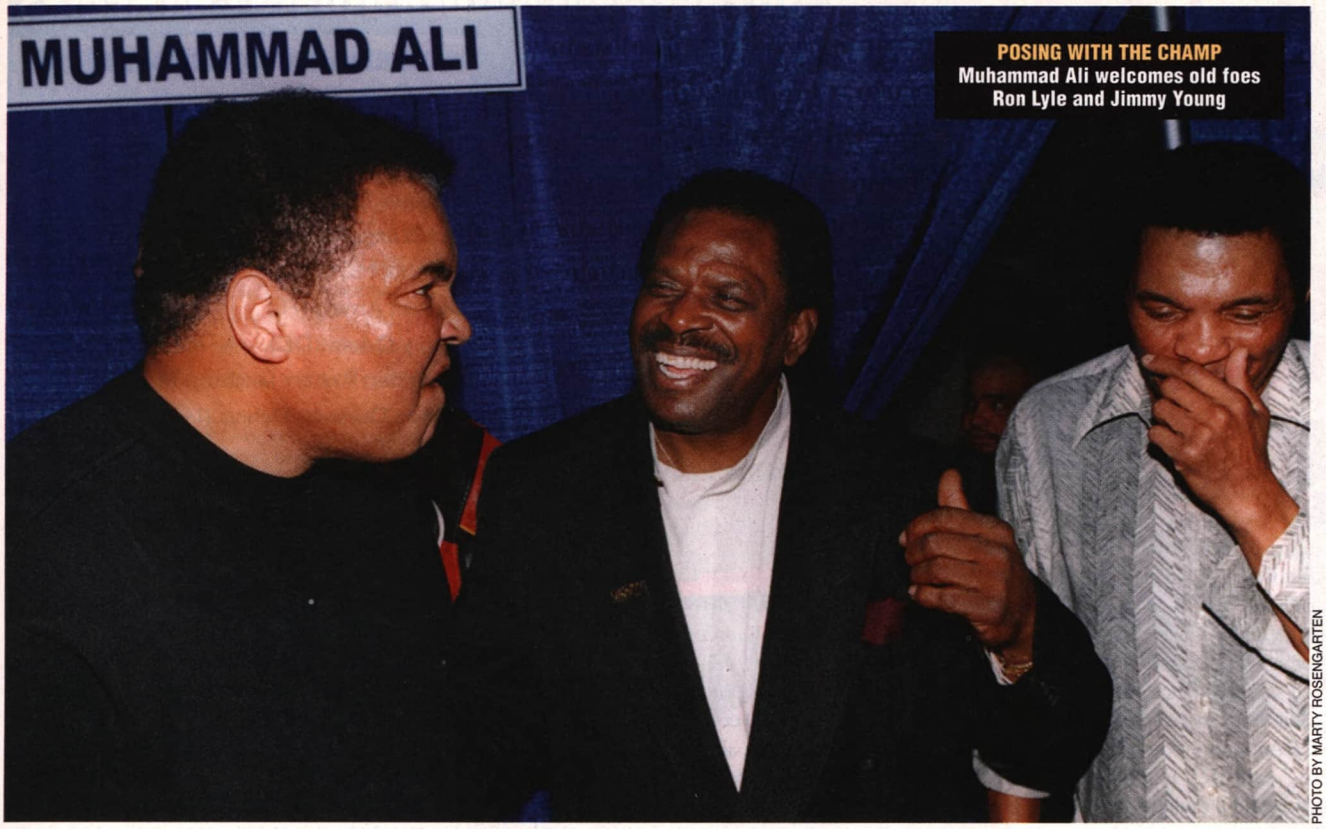
As it turned out, the fight made Hopkins a star. He baffled Trinidad with a tactical masterpiece, scoring a 12th-round TKO. B-Hop went on to establish the all-time middleweight title defense record that reached 20 before he lost the title. The punishing defeat ruined Trinidad. He was never the same again, going 2-2 in his final four fights, retiring after dropping a 12-round unanimous decision to Roy Jones in January 2008. Hopkins continues to add to his Hall of Fame career today.

"'King Me' Says Rahman" by Johnnie Whitehead explores the twisted machinations of world heavyweight champion Hasim Rahman's decision to leave promoter Cedric Kushner and sign with Don King. "Not long after Hasim Rahman rocked the boxing world with his fifth-round knockout of Lennox Lewis, King worked more of his sleight-of-hand magic, though some say it was more of the underhanded variety," Whitehead writes.

"Has The Wizard Of Kronk Lost His Magic Wand" by William Dettloff examines the recent losses of Emanuel Steward-trained headliners, Lennox Lewis and Naseem Hamed. "For any other trainer, another day at the office. Win some, lose some. For Steward, something

WATCH THAT SMILE
Don King swooped in and snared world heavyweight champion Hasim Rahman

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN



POSING WITH THE CHAMP
Muhammad Ali welcomes old foes Ron Lyle and Jimmy Young

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

JOE ZONING IN ON ROY
Joe Calzaghe was setting his sights on light heavyweight champ Roy Jones

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

altogether different," Dettloff writes. Lewis recovered to destroy Rahman in the rematch, Hamed fought just once more after losing to Marco Antonio Barrera, and Steward restored his Hall of Fame career by going on to train another world heavyweight champion, Wladimir Klitschko.

"Joe Calzaghe: Let's See What's In Roy Jones' heart" by Brian Doogan delves into the rise of super middleweight Joe Calzaghe as Great Britain's top fighters, Lennox Lewis and Naseem Hamed, were recovering from bad losses. Calzaghe's goal was to fight Roy Jones: "It's a test I believe I can live up to. The better the opponent, the better I perform," said Calzaghe. "People have not seen the best of me." Seven years later, Calzaghe got his chance, coming off the canvas in the first round to beat what had, by then, become a shopworn version of Jones.

"Ali's Greatest Gift To His Opponents: The Greatest Memories Of Their Careers" by Eric Bottjer focuses on a special event involving Muhammad Ali when "The Greatest" was surprised by a number of former opponents who were also at an autograph show in Edison, New Jersey. Ali was greeted by Chuck Wepner, Ron Lyle, Doug Jones, Jimmy Young, and Leon Spinks. They all seemed to enjoy being in the company of the champ, as Ali playfully whispered into Lyle's ear, "Still think you can take me? Still think you can knock me out?" The one former foe that refused to pose with Ali was Joe Frazier, who said, "Naw, forget it. He called me that name," Frazier said, referring to Ali's "Gorilla" moniker he placed on Frazier. Wepner tried continuously to get Frazier to pose with Ali, saying Ali "had nicknames for everyone." Retorted Frazier to Wepner, "He didn't give you one." Wepner, known as "The Bayonne Bleeder," laughed and pointed to his war-torn face, "Look at me, I didn't need one." Frazier grinned at the remark, but he still refused to budge. ■

AMATEUR NEWS & VIEWS

By Michael Rivest

2011 NATIONAL GOLDEN GLOVES CHAMPIONS

April 25-20, 2011 • Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, IN

108-pounds: Santos Vasquez (NV) dec. Oscar Mojica (TX)
114-pounds: Louie Byrd (CO-NM) dec. Stephon Young (MO)
123-pounds: Tramaine Williams (NE) dec. Antonio Nieves (OH)
132-pounds: Erick DeLeon (MI) dec. Louis Cruz (NY Metro)
141-pounds: Michael Reed (DC) dec. George Rincon (TX)
152-pounds: Arturo Trujillo (PA) dec. Alex Martin (IL)
165-pounds: Jesse Hart (PA) dec. Daquan Arnett (FL)
178-pounds: Caleb Plant (TN) dec. Jerry Odom (DC)
201-pounds: Michael Hunter (CO-NM) dec. Robert Jekabson (IL)
201+ pounds: Cam Thompson (MO) dec. Donavan Dennis (IA)

Team Championships

1st Place: Texas
2nd Place: Washington, DC
3rd Place: Colorado-New Mexico

College Boxing: Alive And Punching

Say "Golden Gloves" to young amateur boxing fans, and they'll immediately know what you're talking about. "USA Boxing" and the "Police Athletic League" will also get heads nodding in recognition. But say "collegiate boxing," and those same heads are likely to cock from side-to-side the way Fido does when you try talking to him. Odds are that even you are probably too young to remember when "college" and "boxing" belonged in the same sentence.

But the National Collegiate Boxing Association (NCBA) wants you to know something: "We're here," said Ken Cooper, NCBA President since 2009. "And although we've changed a lot from the way things were back when, we're going strong."

And they are. But until 1960, college boxing didn't need to call attention to itself. Starting in 1919, it grew in ways no one could have imagined, holding its first NCAA tournament in 1937. Three years later, when the University of Wisconsin hosted Washington State University, 15,000 fans attended. That same night at Madison Square Garden, only two-thirds as many saw Joe Louis defend the heavyweight title against Johnny Paycheck. By the 1950s, over 200 colleges had teams.

But it all came crashing down on April 9, 1960. Middleweight Charlie Mohr from the University of Wisconsin was dropped in the second round of a national championship bout. Although the referee stopped the contest and Mohr walked to the locker room, he soon collapsed, dying eight days later of a brain hemorrhage.

Sports Illustrated wrote back then that such a tragedy in college boxing would "doom the sport."

They were right insofar as boxing lost its NCAA status, but, if you think the sport was counted out entirely, keep reading.

"There was more to the NCAA's decision than Charlie Mohr's death," said Jim McNally, coach at the United States Naval Academy. "Some schools were giving scholarships, and some, particularly in the East, weren't. We started to see more and more mismatches.

"Colleges started dropping their programs, and it all got added to the fact that people weren't comfortable with boxing in the first place," continued McNally, referring to the stereotypes that have always plagued the sport.

ARMY VS. COAST GUARD
Army's Heneo-Escobar lands an uppercut on Justin Maio's chin

PHOTO BY TOMMY GILLIGAN

"But as it turns out, it wasn't the end of us," Cooper said, "far from it."

Five schools on the West Coast decided to keep boxing as clubs because, well, just because. Calling themselves the California Boxing Association, they offered no varsity status, no scholarships, and no pay for coaches. They wouldn't even allow experienced boxers on the team. "They instituted the 16-year-old rule," McNally said, which required that a boxer not have any bouts after that age. That way, the reasoning went, the playing field would be leveled by reducing boxers' experience to near zero, effectively ending mismatches.

So college boxing chugged along, a mere vestige of its former self. But while it was chugging, the fans were showing up. The next thing you knew, schools in the East started programs.

And don't kid yourself, the boxing got real good in spite of any built-in skill limits. Some graduates also went on to do rather well in life: referee Mills Lane, Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA), former Astronaut and Marine Major General Charles Bolden, and retired Lt. Col. Oliver North, just to name a few from an extremely long list.

"I have such wonderful memories, boxing for the Naval Academy," North said, who fought there in the 1960s. "We all learned so much from Emerson Smith, our coach." North then offered a litany of examples, all supporting his passionately held belief that collegiate boxing prepares "tomorrow's leaders and better Americans."

"Boxing teaches people about themselves," he said, "and where their limits are, and in a way you don't learn anywhere else in college, that's for sure."

In 1976, participating schools joined to form the NCBA. Although it averages 36 schools in any given year, "the number changes based upon the availability of coaches and athletes," said Cooper.

"As of this year," McNally noted, "the 16-year-old rule became simply one allowing no more that 10 bouts by the time you get to your first year."

Despite its marginal status on campus compared to NCAA sports, there's no denying the hold collegiate boxing has on the fans. "It's third in ticket sales here," says Mike Martino, coach at University of Nevada, Reno and NCBA President for 19 years before Cooper took the helm. "It's behind only basketball and football. Remember, this is a club sport made up of scholar athletes who pay their own tuition and do their own laundry after workouts. Nobody does these kids any favors."

"We may be the red-headed stepchildren on college campuses," added McNally, "but, at our brigade championship at the Naval Academy, we'll get 5,000 people in the arena."

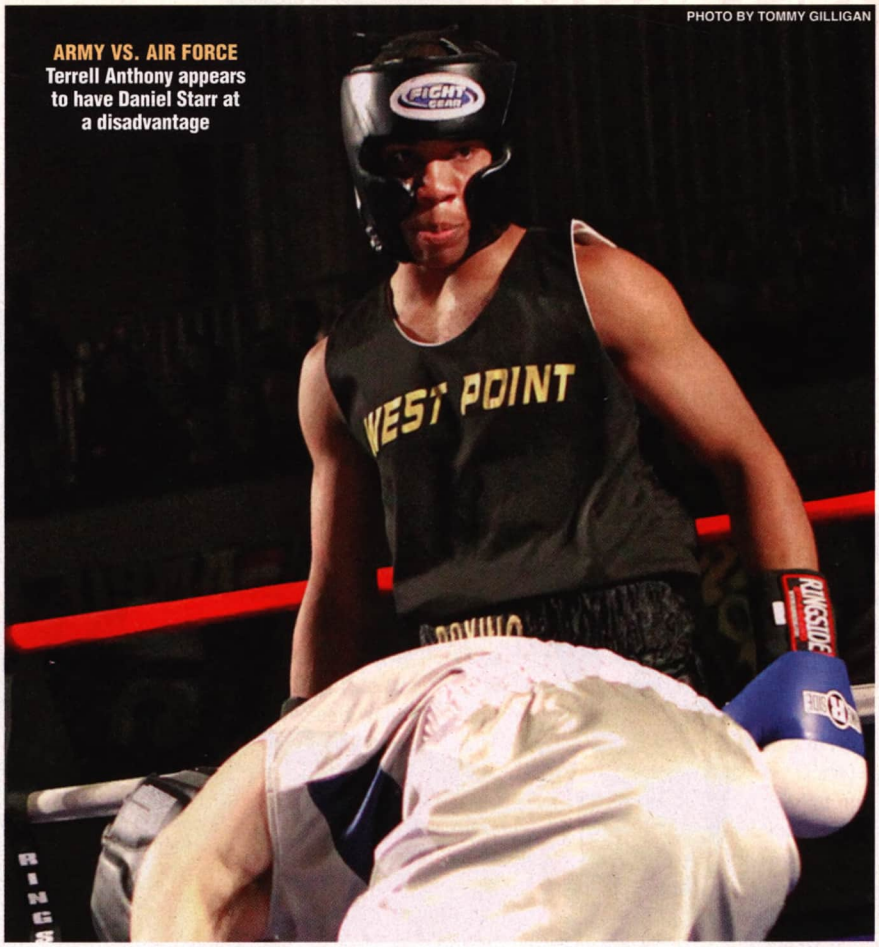


PHOTO BY TOMMY GILLIGAN

ARMY VS. AIR FORCE
Terrell Anthony appears to have Daniel Starr at a disadvantage

So given their success, they plan to petition for a return to NCAA status, right? You know, give scholarships to kids with 100 amateur fights and maybe produce a future Olympian from their ranks.

"That's not even under discussion," said Dr. Ray Barone, Coach at the United States Military Academy (USMA), reigning NCBA Team Champion for the past four years. "We all think we have a good program just as it is. We don't want people hurt unnecessarily, and, honestly, done the way it is, it's pure sport. These are students first. They're in class all day; then they come here, get hit, bleed, and then do their homework when it's done. It's exciting enough right now."

Besides, McNally said, adding a pragmatic note, "These days, no university would want to take on the cost of one more varsity sport. It would never happen."

"And as soon as the purity of the sport is sacrificed," argued Martino, we'd lose something."

The purity of the sport: It's a phrase that keeps coming up whether you talk to an NCBA coach or athlete. Most like things the way they are—but not everybody.

There's something about keeping the best amateurs out of the system that rankles some people.

"Boxing is an old-school sport," said Cadet Steven Heneo-Escobar, co-captain of the USMA Team. "You want to face the best and not limit it. It gives you the wrong feeling. They should let it grow.

"Don't misunderstand," continued the two-time NCBA 147-pound champion, "I don't regret anything about NCBA. It's just that lots of us are on a par with any boxer anywhere."

Heneo-Escobar plans to compete for a slot on the USA's 2012 Olympic Team.

"Of course, these are very competitive people," Martino said. "It's understandable that some would feel that way.

"Given what boxing is," added North, "you should be allowed to test yourself against the best. The way it stands, it's part of the whole wave of political correctitude that swept the country—to try somehow to make boxing safe. Well, life's not safe."

Either way, the NCBA wants you to know that this much is certain: College boxing is here, and it's not about to go away—ever. ■

(For more information on college boxing, check out the NCBA website: www.collegeboxing.org)

THE SWEETER SCIENCE

By Chris Richards

PHOTO BY MARTIN ROSE/BONGARTS/GETTY IMAGES

Cecilia Braekhus: "The First Lady" Of Norwegian Boxing

It's tough enough for female boxers to get ahead in a sport dominated by men, but Celcilia Braekhus faces an additional obstacle: Boxing is illegal in her homeland of Norway!

Born in Cartagena, Colombia, Braekhus left Colombia for her father's home of Bergen, Norway, at the age of two. She started kickboxing at 14 and won both the European and World amateur kickboxing championships in 2003. Braekhus switched to boxing and was good enough to win a silver medal at the European championships in 2004. She won the next year. As a professional, she's won three alphabet titles and is considered the best female welterweight in the world by many experts. "The First Lady" was voted 2010 Female Boxer of the Year by the German publication *BoxSport*.

Braekhus, 18-0 (4), isn't trying to escape poverty and crime. She's doing what she loves to do. Even so, there is a hard edge hiding beneath modesty surprising to an American but as natural as a Floyd Mayweather's braggadocio in Norway.

Braekhus had to learn boxing without the benefit of any grounding in the sport. "I never really followed the sport before signing with Wilfried Sauerland," she explained. "I've been to some big fights, but it's only in the last year or so that I've really started learning about the sport. It's always just been what I was doing."

Switching from kickboxing to boxing was an even bigger challenge than she expected. "I thought it would be easy," she admitted. "Boxing and kickboxing are completely different sports. The stance, the defense, the way you punch, the footwork—everything is different. Making the transition was very hard. I didn't feel comfortable at all until after eight or nine fights."

Nor did she simply fall into professional success. Due to the boxing ban, fighting in Norway was not an option, so Braekhus relocated to Berlin in 2007. "I didn't speak the language," she remembered, "and the culture was very different. Things were much more formal."

The adjustment from an amateur experience she describes as "six or seven girls having fun" to the Prussian discipline of a professional German boxing gym was particularly difficult. She fought four times in three countries in her first year as a professional and then took a much needed break from boxing that lasted until January of 2008. But don't think she wasn't working just because she wasn't in the gym. Though unfamiliar with the Americanism, Braekhus admits to being a workaholic.

"I couldn't just go lie on a beach for a week and not do anything," she said. "I tried that once, and I couldn't stand it. I like work, so I take working holidays."

During her first working holiday, she signed with Sauerland Events, and, when she returned to the ring in January of 2008, it was with veteran trainer Ulli Wegner in her corner, Wilfried Sauerland promoting her, and Kalle Sauerland as her manager. With a solid team behind her, Braekhus fought six times in 2008, including her sole US appearance, when she won a unanimous decision over Nicole Woods in Hollywood, Florida. The fight with Woods is a good memory.

"I didn't know what to expect," Braekhus said. "Everyone wants to fight in America. It has so much boxing—what is the word?—mythology. I was surprised at how many local fans embraced me, especially in the Latin community. I felt very welcome. I really want to fight in America again."

It hasn't happened yet. Instead, Sauerland has continued to move Braekhus very skillfully. Braekhus fought former amateur rival Vinni Skovgaard for the WBA and WBC belts in Kiel, Germany, in March of 2010.

WORKING HARD
Braekhus attacks Emery en route to a unanimous decision victory.

PHOTO BY MARY ANN OWEN

She won by unanimous decision and has since posted seven successful title defenses, picking up a third vacant alphabet title (the WBO) in the process. The Skovgaard victory gave The First Lady one more selling point. She was now Norway's first ever professional "world champion."

Braekhus and Sauerland have capitalized on the home market. Five of Braekhus's seven defenses have been in Denmark. Americans sometimes forget how big the United States is. It's different in Europe. Norwegians can get to Denmark about as conveniently as Kelly Pavlik's legion of Ohio fans can reach Atlantic City. Pan-European TV networks gives access to those fans who don't want to take a plane or catch a ferry across the Skagerrak (the strait between Norway, Sweden, and Denmark) to Copenhagen or Herning.

Since beating Skovgaard, Braekhus has given specific direction to her working vacations.

"I go back to Norway, and I do a lot of different stuff there," she said. "When I am in Norway, my job is to be seen so that people will buy my fights. I go to fashion shows. I also do seminars on mental training and how it has applied to my boxing career. I love to meet people. I had a very interesting trip to Uganda last year with a Norwegian group. It was a seminar for women: women lawyers, businesswomen."

Braekhus is potentially a lot more marketable in the States than many European fighters. She speaks English and is as happy to talk to boxing writers as they are to talk to her. Despite her low knockout percentage, she is a fan-friendly boxer-puncher whose style is far more versatile than the stereotypical stiff European headhunter. In her most recent bout prior to press time, she beat Chevelle Hallback by unanimous decision in Copenhagen on May 5th.

Hallback, 28-6-2 (11), is an icon of American women's boxing. She's held multiple titles at 130 and 136 pounds and holds a win over hard-hitting Canadian star Jeannine Garside. She was also two weight classes smaller and 10 years older than Braekhus. Hallback is the biggest notch on Braekhus's gun to date.

Holly Holm issued an Internet challenge to Braekhus early in 2011. There has been no official response from Sauerland Event, and Braekhus acknowledges that her promoter will make the final decision about whom she fights and where. But Braekhus was happy to make her personal feelings known.

"I would love to fight Holly Holm," she said. "I would love to fight her in America, but I don't want to fight her in her hometown. It would be one of the biggest fights, and it would be so much fun to be part of something like that."

Braekhus' enthusiasm is both convincing and emphatic. She has no plans to sit and wait. She'll keep working at home, on vacation, in the gym, and in the ring. In her opinion, the fact that her opposition has not always been the best available means she has a greater responsibility to meet fans' expectations when she fights. Holm is not the only option if she wishes to solidify her resume. A match with well-protected German welterweight Jessica Balogun would be a big draw in Germany. Whatever direction her career takes, Brakehus is confident she will keep winning and overjoyed to be living her dream.

"It's what we work for," she said with a laugh. "If you can make a living doing what makes you happy, nothing is better." ■

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By Don Stewart

PHOTO BY NAOKI FUKUDA

Junior Featherweight Teon Kennedy

Teon Kennedy and his team were celebrating in the ring, completely unaware that a life-and-death situation was unfolding in the opposite corner.

Francisco "Paco" Rodriguez, who had fought valiantly throughout a back-and-forth affair, collapsed shortly after his November 2009 bout with Kennedy was stopped midway through the 10th round. Rodriguez was suddenly being transported out of the ring on a stretcher, and Kennedy and his team were being told to clear the ring.

"It was a shock to me," Kennedy recalled. "As the fight was going on, the guy was still throwing punches back. It was a pretty hard fight."

The 25-year-old Rodriguez lapsed into a coma and died two days later, leaving behind a wife and an infant daughter.

Unsure of how they'd be received, Kennedy and his team visited the hospital to pay their respects on the morning of the day that Paco was taken off life support. The Rodriguez family welcomed them and let the young fighter know they didn't blame him for the tragedy.

"It was just a massive crying, so to speak," said Kennedy's co-manager, Doc Nowicki.

Despite the goodwill from the Rodriguez family, no one could predict how Kennedy would be affected. There's no shortage of notable fighters—Ezzard Charles, Emile Griffith, Ray Mancini, Jesus Chavez—who were never quite the same after the death of an opponent. Kennedy was clearly at a turning point.

While only Kennedy can know exactly what is in his mind and heart, the 25-year-old Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, junior featherweight has marched on with incredible resiliency. Six months after the Rodriguez fight, he returned with a grueling 12-round win against Jose Angel Beranza. Kennedy, 17-0-1 (7), stopped Alex Becera last September then posted his most notable win to date, a dominant-yet-exciting 12-round decision against previously unbeaten Jorge Diaz on the Yuriorkis Gamboa-Jorge Solis undercard in March.

"I don't think about that fight," Kennedy said of the Rodriguez bout. "The only times I've thought about it is when it first happened, and then those first two weeks afterward. It happens in the sport."

Nowicki said he believes his fighter still thinks about Rodriguez' death from time to time but doesn't obsess over what happened. "I don't think he dwells on it," the veteran manager said. "That was his job. If you're a factory worker and the guy on the machine next to you gets hurt, you're still gonna think about that, even though you're on the other end of the machine. But it's not gonna keep you from still going to work."

Against Diaz, Kennedy certainly didn't look like a fighter who was afraid to pull the trigger. He slugged it out with Diaz through the first half of the fight, dropping the New Jersey prospect twice. Kennedy's better conditioning, body work, and potent jab allowed him to pull away late as "The Technician" won comfortably on all three cards.

"I felt that was a fight I needed to show everyone that I'm here to stay," Kennedy said. "I felt I was in control of the fight. I think it's going to open up a lot of doors for me."

After he dropped Diaz with a left hook to the forehead in the third, Kennedy abandoned the patient outside strategy his team had devised. It's a common theme for Kennedy, and it represents the biggest concern for Team Kennedy these days, besides their fighter's tender eyes (he was cut above both against Diaz).

"We want him to be perfect or as close as he can," Nowicki said. "One of the things that we're trying to correct is sometimes he gets too ballsy."

Kennedy, whose 72-inch reach is lengthy for a 122-pounder, had a few close calls on the cards early in his career. He earned a majority decision against Francisco Palacios in his fifth pro bout, despite the other two judges having him well ahead. In March 2009, Kennedy won a split decision against Andre Wilson. Six months later, the unheralded Lante Addy held him to a majority draw in Atlantic City, New Jersey. When he asked state officials for an explanation, Nowicki was told that Addy was given points for aggressiveness.

Kennedy apparently took note. He said he doesn't like to leave any doubt in the judges' minds, which is why he's often overcome by the temptation to slug it out. And while he didn't say it, there was something in Kennedy's voice that seemed to indicate a preference for brawling.

"Most people compare me to Meldrick Taylor," he said. "I can box and slug if I have to. I would rather box, but somehow I'm always in a slugging fight."

Kennedy has been slugging it out since he was a little kid. His father, Ernest Kennedy, was a Philadelphia southpaw middleweight who had an eight-year pro career (1989-'97). Before he even started grade school, Teon was trying to follow Ernest to Joe Frazier's Gym and accompany him while he did his roadwork.

Ernest let Teon start boxing at age six. He played football and baseball, and one year of basketball at Strawberry Mansion High School in North Philadelphia. After he won the flyweight title at the 2004 National Golden Gloves, however, a 17-year-old Kennedy was firmly focused on boxing.

"I always felt that [I would eventually go pro], but what really made me want to turn pro was when I won the National Golden Gloves," said Kennedy.

Kennedy opted to pass on a shot at the 2008 Beijing Games in favor of turning pro in January 2007. Brothers Wade and Randy Hinnant have trained him since his amateur days while Nowicki and partners Jimmy Williams and Joe Hand have managed him since he turned pro.

Philadelphia promoter J Russell Peltz has been working with Top Rank to get Kennedy more exposure. As of mid-May, The Technician was headed toward an August 13 bout on Top Rank's Fox Sports Net series against an opponent to be determined.

"The more that people see him," Nowicki said, "hopefully the more they'll like him, and he'll end up getting a world title shot."

It's a shot that Kennedy has been dreaming about since he could barely walk. He's only 25, but he's already spent almost two decades in Philly gyms mastering the sport. While all that experience made him ready for just about anything that could happen in a ring, there's no way to teach a fighter how to react when the unthinkable occurs.

Like Rodriguez' death.

"I never thought that would happen in the same fight that I would be in," Kennedy said. "I don't think anything could prepare you for that."

Somehow, Kennedy has handled it like a champ. ■

PRO RECORD

2007		
Jan. 11	Marsay Buggs, Philadelphia, PA	KO 1
March 2	Omar Reyes, Philadelphia	KO 1
April 21	Jose L. Guzman, Philadelphia	W 4
July 20	Elias Castillo, Philadelphia	KO 4
Aug. 31	Francisco Palacios, Niagara Falls, NY	W 6
Oct. 5	James Franks, Philadelphia	KO 2
Dec. 8	Arthur Parker, Hockessin, DE	W 4
2008		
March 7	Castulo Gonzalez, Philadelphia	W 8
July 18	Thomas Snow, Philadelphia	KO 2
Sept. 19	Robert DaLuz, Hockessin	W 6
Nov. 14	Felipe Almanza, Philadelphia	W 6
2009		
March 6	Andre Wilson, Philadelphia	W 8
June 6	Lucian Gonzalez, Atlantic City, NJ	W 8
Sept. 19	Lante Addy, Atlantic City	D 8
Nov. 20	Francisco Rodriguez, Philadelphia	KO 10
2010		
May 22	Jose Angel Beranza, Atlantic City	W 12
Sept. 25	Alex Becerra, Atlantic City	KO 10
2011		
March 26	Jorge Diaz, Atlantic City	W 12

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
18	17	0	1	7

FIGHT DOCTOR

by Margaret Goodman, M.D.

Leg Cramps: The Cause & Cure

After chasing Shane Mosley around the MGM Grand Garden ring to win a lopsided 12-round decision, Manny Pacquiao declared his performance was less than stellar due to a left calf muscle cramp. The persistent spasm began during round four, and, despite trainer Freddie Roach's massage between rounds, the ailment would not dissipate.

Although muscle cramps are common in athletes, we rarely hear of a boxer proclaiming severe limitations because of one during a bout. So, THE RING thought we would take this opportunity to explore the causes, treatment, and prevention of muscle cramps.

People alternately control and relax muscles as they move. A muscle that involuntarily (without consciously willing it) contracts is termed a "spasm." If the spasm is sustained, it becomes a cramp, and you may see a visible hardening of the involved muscle. It can last anywhere from seconds to hours, or it can reoccur multiple times until it ultimately resolves.

Cramps can be caused by multiple circumstances and occur in many locations. In this article, we will be dealing with skeletal muscles, but a cramp can involve any muscle, even those belonging to various organs such as the lung or bladder.

If a fighter were to suffer a broken bone, the associated muscles around that bone will cramp as a protective mechanism. Excessive exercise and muscle fatigue can produce cramps during the time of the activity or later. Rest cramps that occur at night can be painful and disrupt sleep. Boxing and other forms of vigorous activity produce excessive perspiration, fluid loss, and dehydration, which increase the likelihood of cramps.

It is not simply the fluid loss, rather the loss of important electrolytes, vitamins, and minerals producing the cramp. Low potassium can cause muscle cramps, although it typically first presents itself as muscle weakness. Calcium and magnesium fluctuations or depletion, as well as deficiencies of vitamin B1, B6 and D, directly or indirectly produce cramps. Lastly, medications such as diuretics can lead to cramps through the rapid depletion of bodily fluids or sodium (salts).

Strength and conditioning specialist, Dave "Scooter" Honig, recommends repeated electrolyte replacement, especially during sparring, to prevent cramping.

"I believe electrolytes are extremely important, especially when fighters are dropping their water. When a boxer replaces their water, they are often not replacing the correct proportion of electrolytes, said Honig. "Throughout camp, I have my guys take electrolyte stamina tablets before and after training. But, the fighter needs to remember to drink significant fluids with their supplementation."

Honig is also a big proponent of mineral and branched chain amino acid replacement to ward off cramps.

Former BALCO chief and nutrition expert Victor Conte agrees on supplementation to deter cramps. He has been studying muscle tightness and cramping of elite athletes for more than 25 years. He notes, "The training of explosive strength and speed athletes, such as boxers, causes retention of sodium and calcium. Both of these minerals are competitive with the absorption and utilization of magnesium." As a result, Conte contends that a fighter can develop a depletion of his magnesium stores.

"It's my opinion that many elite boxers are depleted in magnesium and that this can promote muscle tightness and cramping. In the late 1990s, I tested both the serum and red blood cell magnesium levels of over 250 NFL players. More than 70 percent of the players were found to be depleted in magnesium."

In an effort to combat magnesium depletion, Conte developed and introduced a product called ZMA (zinc magnesium aspartate) through his nutrition company SNAC (Scientific Nutrition for Advanced Conditioning) in 1988. Countless world-class athletes, including several boxers, such as Nonito Donaire, currently use ZMA to reduce muscle tightness and cramps.

Stretching before and after exercise in addition to adequate warm-up and cool-down can prevent cramps, but little can replace good hydration.

Hydration replacement guidelines must be individualized. Any athlete, especially a boxer, should weigh themselves before and after sparring to determine how much weight they lose (in fluids). One liter of water weighs 2¼ pounds. Depending on the amount of exertion, body temperature, humidity, and body weight, a fighter could lose between 0.4 to 1.8 liters of water per hour. Before exercise, the athlete should pre-hydrate and perhaps even consume electrolyte beverages, sodium-containing snacks, or supplements to help stimulate thirst, and retain fluids. During training or a fight, the athlete should consume 0.4 to 0.8 liters of fluid per hour. Post-exercise or competition, the boxer should drink 0.5 liters of water for every pound lost.

Many theorists propose that an isolated muscle cramp, such as Pacquiao's, was not solely due to dehydration or metabolic imbalance. They believe that exercise-related cramps stem from a malfunction in control of the muscle by the nerves or an abnormality of neuromuscular control due to fatigue, which results in disruption of muscle coordination. This makes sense, as when someone cramps, it is typically a specific muscle or muscle group involved. Overworking a muscle causes a pull in it, which stimulates the nerves to fire impulses producing a tighter and tighter spasm.

As tried by Roach, treatment is massage and stretching. Often, walking or stretching the affected muscle will work. For a calf cramp, leaning 2 to 2½ feet into a wall against your forearms, your knees and back straight with your feet flat on the floor, will sufficiently stretch the calves. If sitting, flexing the ankles by pulling the toes up toward the head can help. Gentle muscle massage can relax the muscle with the application of a heating pad or hot soak. Obviously, each of these maneuvers is difficult to perform during the one-minute rest period!

In the end, preventing cramps comes down to proper preparation and discussion with a conditioning expert and/or a physician to determine if supplementation is warranted. This might include baseline blood testing to eliminate the possibility of electrolyte, vitamin, or mineral deficiencies.

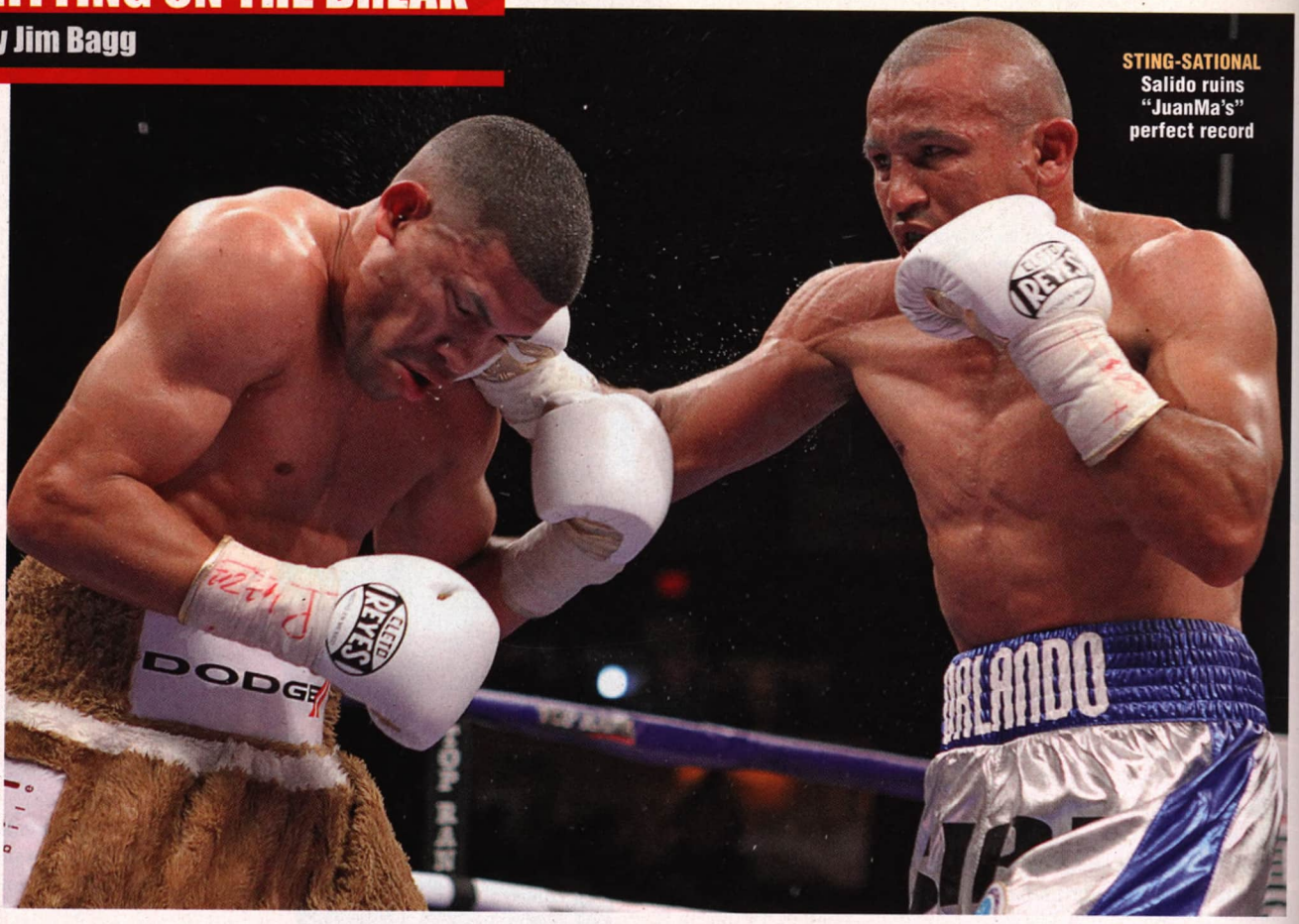
The last thing a boxer wants is to have to deal with an excruciating muscle cramp during a fight. It appears that Pacquiao was fortunate to have not faced Mosley during Sugar Shane's prime, when a serious leg cramp could have very well meant the difference between winning or losing. ■

WORKING HARD
Maybe Pacquiao needs a dose of ZMA

PHOTO BY DAVID LIVINGSTONE/GETTY IMAGES

HITTING ON THE BREAK

by Jim Bagg



STING-SATIONAL Salido ruins "JuanMa's" perfect record

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

"EL PEZ" STINGS Martinez (right) en route to upset of Concepcion

PHOTO BY CHRIS COZZONE/FIGHTWIRE IMAGES

The Year Of The Stingray

Anyone else sick and tired of hearing about that horse named "Upset"? The Baggarooney doesn't care if that horse was a million-to-one long shot to beat Man O' War. He doesn't care if you rode through the desert on a horse with no name, and, of course, of course, he doesn't care whether a horse is a horse. The story behind where the term "upset" came from (or didn't come from, since some researchers with too much time on their hands now claim the term predates this horse) is completely played out.

And frankly, so is the word "upset." Sports fans and sports writers have been using it for a century, give or take. It's time for something new. It's time for us to start using a new word—and, in turn, relating a new origin story that doesn't involve someone whose species can be prefaced with the words "hung like a."

Luckily, the Baggalicious has that word. And he has that origin story. The word, as you readers well know, is "Stingray." And its inspiration, as you also well know, is one Ron "Stingray" McCarthy. The legendary Mr. McCarthy had lost nine straight fights before shocking unbeaten Stanley Allen via second-round knockout in Atlantic City on March 14, 1998. McCarthy then proceeded to lose his next 10 fights before retiring in 2001 with a final record of 8-24-1. McCarthy didn't upset Allen; he Stingrayed him. "Hitting On The Break" readers already know that, of course. But it's time for the rest of the world to wake up and smell the Stingray.

We have to start small. Before we can get the entire world to use this word, we have to tackle the boxing world. Already, in 2011, every uncreative writer out there (in other words, every writer out there besides the Baggloney Sandwich) has been quick to call this "the year of the upset." Bor-ing! Forget "the year of the upset." This is the year of the Stingray! Come on, how much cooler does that sound?

Now that we have the semantics out of the way, let's explore some of the superstars of Stinging who are making this the year of the Stingray:

Orlando Salido: Juan Manuel Lopez was 30-0. Salido was 34-11-2. Every loss Stings, but, when a loss kills a superfight (Bob Arum had Lopez-Yuriorkis Gamboa penciled in for Puerto Rican Day Parade weekend, 2027), it Stings like the pepper spray the Baggadocio took in the eyes last year when he reached into his pants to innocently scratch an itch (something you apparently shouldn't do when a cop pulls you over). Salido's Stingin' days began in 2001, when he knocked out 17-1 Dustin Kim. Then it was Regilio Tuur, Lamont Pearson, Radford Beasley, and Freddy Neal, all of whom had much glossier records. Salido's Stinging peak seemed to arrive in '06 when he outpointed Robert Guerrero, but a pesky positive steroid test turned it into a no-contest. Salido got a second chance at Stingsational glory against JuanMa, and he landed one right-hand bomb after another until he forced an eighth-round stoppage. 30-0 becomes 30-1. 34-11-2 becomes 35-11-2. That's a Stingray if ever the Bagg Lebowski has seen one.

Nobuhiro Ishida: His Baggnificence covered this one in detail last issue, so there's not much else to say about the Japanese guy who blitzed James Kirkland in one round. Ishida was 22-6-2. Kirkland was 27-0. In a show of Mayweather-esque racial insensitivity, the Baggmeister is ordering Ishida one slice of raw, freshly caught Stingray, wrapped in sticky rice and seaweed.

WHERE THE RING AND *US WEEKLY* INTERSECT

Great news for lonely, delusional guys like the Baggarific and most of his readers: Hayden Panettiere is single! Ah, but the bad news: Her ex-boyfriend, Wladimir Klitschko, is the heavyweight champion of the world, and he could beat us all to bloody pulps if he so chose. So, uh, never mind, Hayden. The Baggapalooza can be perfectly content having a relationship with you in his mind, if you catch the Baggster's drift.

Well, Wlad and Hayden may be a couple no more, but they don't have to be the last tabloid-worthy tandem involving a boxing personality. So the Baggarazzi is getting creative and suggesting a few interesting couples he suspects we'll see together soon:

Saul Alvarez and Demi Moore: Sorry, Ashton, but you're getting old. Demi needs a new cradle to rob.

Andrew Golota and Jennifer Lopez: Just so the press can refer to the duo as "J-Lo-Blow."

Paulie Malignaggi and Lady Gaga: Think of the money they'd save sharing a wardrobe!

Johnny Tapia and Sandra Bullock: We know Sandy just can't resist an unreliable guy with a lot of tats.

Alfredo Angulo and Madonna: It's simple, really: "El Perro" needs to team up with someone with expertise in pushing her love over the borderline.

Floyd Mayweather and Rihanna: Does the Baggalamadingdong really need to spell out the joke here?

Vitali Klitschko and Hayden Panettiere: You want to see a Klitschko vs. Klitschko fight? This might be the only way we make it happen.

PHOTO BY DARIO CANTATORE/GETTY IMAGES

THE MONTHLY MAILBAGG

You conspiracy theorists want physical proof that Osama Bin Laden is actually dead? He hasn't sent a single email to the Baggamaniac's mailbagg since early-May. That settles it.

Mr. Baggnificent,

Well, you warned me that Pacquiao-Mosley was going to suck, and I went ahead and bought the pay-per-view anyway. What can I say, I'm a boxing fan, and I can't handle knowing a big fight is on and I'm not watching it. Here's my question: What fights for Pacquiao would actually be exciting? Doesn't it seem like most of his potential opponents either have boring styles or will get totally dominated?

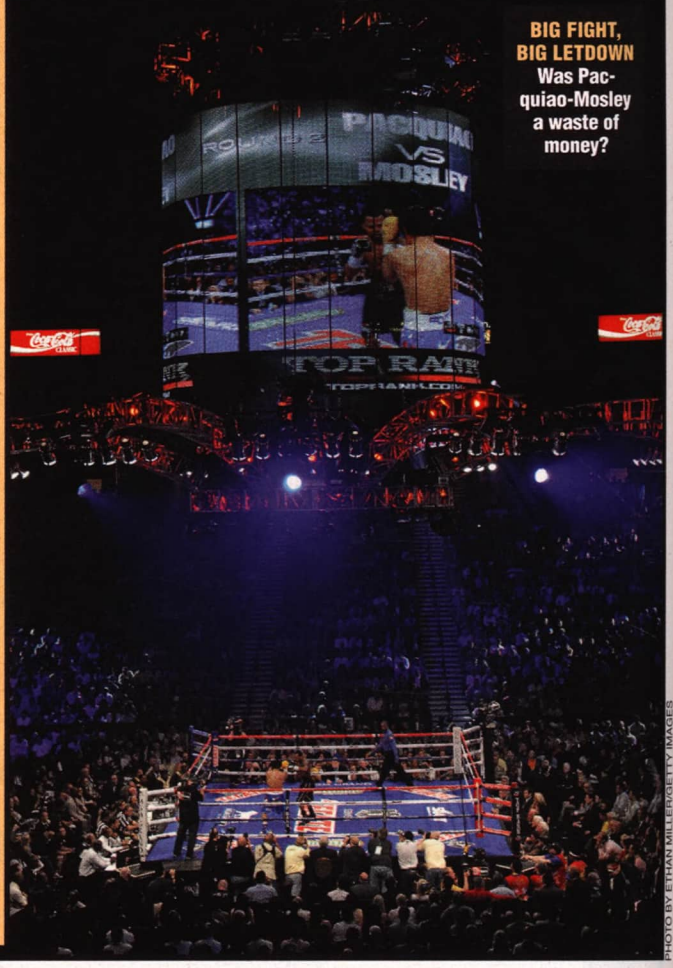
A loyal reader,
Sam

Sammy The Sucker,

Of course you bought that pay-per-view. P.T. Barnum thanks you for making him look like a genius.

Your question is a good one. The Bagganoodle fears that Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather, if it ever happens, would be tension-filled but not exactly thrilling. Pacquiao-Tim Bradley would be ugly (with lots of second-round no-contest potential). But if you're looking to be entertained, there are two fights that should do the trick. Pacquiao-Juan Manuel Marquez III might end up one-sided, but it would provide good action for a few rounds because, as has been established, these styles go together like beer and beer nuts. And Pacquiao-Victor Ortiz would have that one-punch-can-change-everything vibe, which means you'd be entertained while Pac-Man dishes out a beating.

Unfortunately, Pacquiao's so stinkin' good (and so carefully maneuvered now) that his days of producing Fight of the Year candidates may be over. But the good news is that Bob Arum would have to really dig deep to put him in a fight more boring than the Mosley fiasco. Hopefully, the worst is now behind us. Too bad you had to waste $65 to get to this point.



BIG FIGHT, BIG LETDOWN Was Pacquiao-Mosley a waste of money?

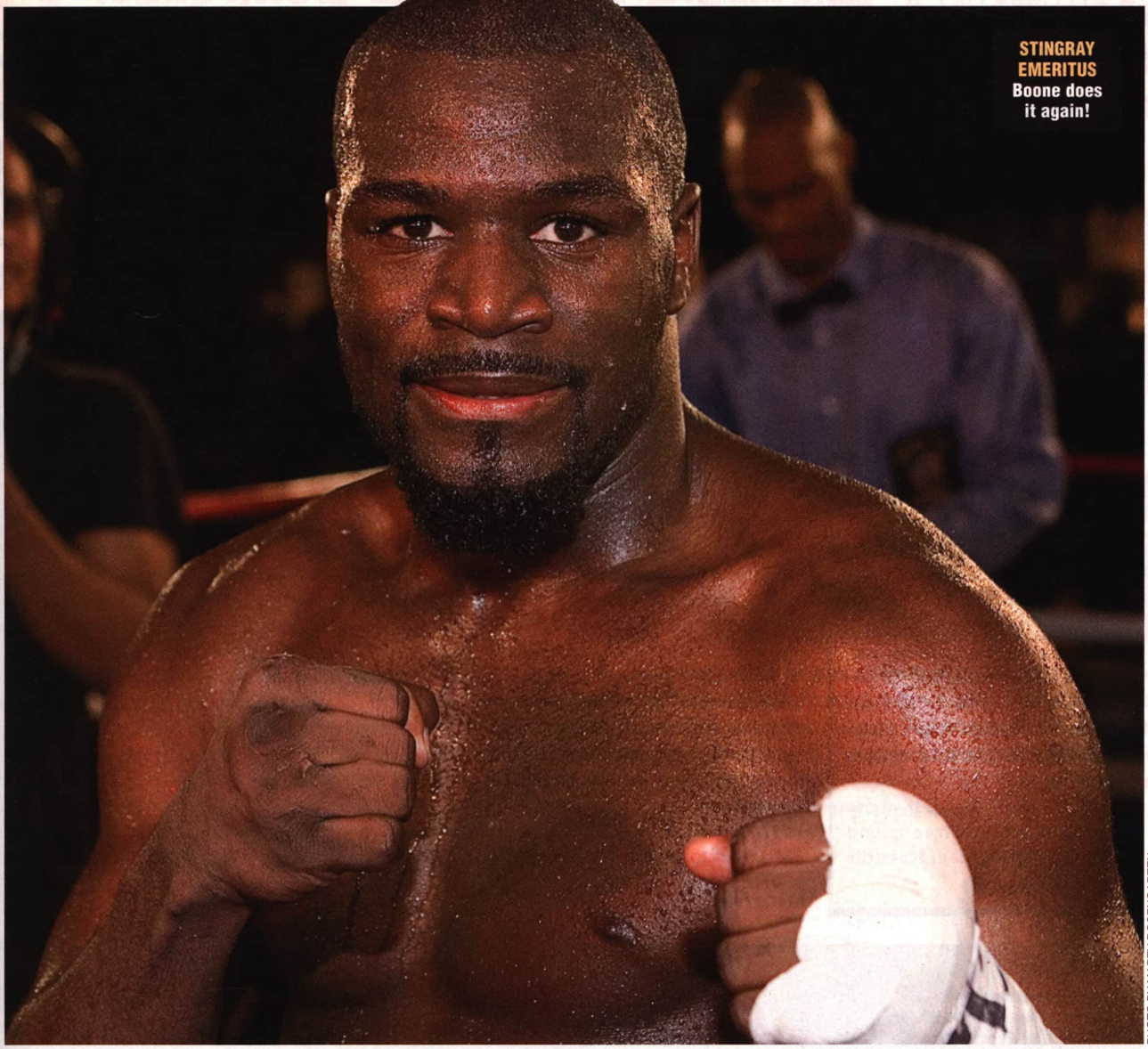
PHOTO BY ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Juan Carlos Martinez: In a classically Stingray-worthy performance, Martinez, a going-nowhere 18-12-1 fighter, topped Bernabe Concepcion, a 28-4-1 contender who'd fought for a title in his previous bout. Technically, Martinez won by split decision after eight rounds. But this was a fight in Las Vegas on the eve of a Manny Pacquiao bout, and Concepcion is a Filipino-born, Pacquiao-managed, Freddie-Roach-trained fighter. You beat a guy like that by split decision, and it's safe to assume you won every round. Fun fact: Martinez' nickname is "El Pez." Does that make his mom "El Pez Dispenser"?

Aaron Pryor Jr.: On occasion, the force of the Sting can't be measured by looking at the records. Pryor was 15-3 coming in, and Librado Andrade was 29-3. So by the numbers alone, it doesn't look like a serious Stingray. But Andrade's losses had come against Mikkel Kessler, Lucian Bute (where a good argument could be made that Andrade deserved to win by knockout), and Bute again (where a good argument could be made that you'd have to be a moron to try to construct an argument). Pryor's name doesn't fit in with those guys. Well, on second thought, his name does fit in—just not when you put the "Jr." after it. The son of a Hall of Fame legend, Pryor Jr. has been treated like a journeyman his whole career, but he didn't behave like a journeyman against Andrade, earning a close but deserved decision. Pryor is built like a praying mantis. Well, if he's an insect, he's definitely one that Stings.

Marco Antonio Rubio: How often do you hear a veteran fighter bust out clichés about "taking the young guy into deep water and seeing if he can swim," then the veteran fighter does nothing round after round and either gets knocked out or loses a lopsided decision? It's as predictable as the burning sensation after a night with a five-dollar whore. And that's why it was so refreshing to see Rubio, with his can't-get-over-the-hump 49-5-1 record and his *Welcome Back Kotter* moustache, say he was going to weather David Lemieux's storm for four rounds and then take over and do precisely that. Rubio waited and waited, and, when the time was right, he turned Lemieux's 25-0 record into 25-1 with a seventh-round stoppage. Good thing he got Lemieux out of there when he did; the ref was Marlon B. Wright, and, even for him, five more rounds is a little too long to drag out a single slow-count to save the hometown kid.

Franky Leal: Leal knows a thing or two about Stinging—but he's only ever expe-



STINGRAY EMERITUS
Boone does it again!

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

rienced it from the other side. When the Mexican featherweight was 7-0, he got stopped by a dude who was 14-17-6. When Leal improved to 11-1, he got TKO'd by an opponent who was 6-4-3. He'd never beaten anybody he wasn't supposed to beat until, with his record down to a deliciously mediocre 14-5-3, he won a split decision over 19-0 Robert Marroquin, one of Top Rank's most prized prospects. Don't worry, Robert. Someday soon, you'll have a bunch of losses and draws on your record and Uncle Bob will feed you to his new hot-shot, then maybe you can go get a Stingray Award of your own.

Jorge Arce: Jorge really made the Baggretariat look like a horse's arce with this one. The fight game's favorite lollipop-sucking reality TV star (at least until Paris Hilton becomes a more permanent fixture at the fights) took undefeated beltholder Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. by surprise in May, stopping the rising Puerto Rican star in the 12th round of an outstanding battle. The guy who came in at 20-0-1 was supposed to easily handle the aging warrior with the 56-6-2 record. Either Vazquez isn't as good as we thought, Arce isn't as shot as we thought, or a fictional Filipino sparring partner has been sticking a needle in Jorge's arce. (Two "arce" jokes in one paragraph! Good luck getting this level of highbrow brilliance from Goldman or Ryan.)

Darnell Boone: Oh yes. He has done it *again*. The man whose name is almost as synonymous with Stinging as the great Ron McCarthy himself, journeyman extraordinaire Boone has earned elite Stingray status by winning an eight-round decision over Willie Monroe Jr., dropping the great-nephew of former middleweight contender Willie "The Worm" Monroe (weird that both his dad and his great uncle were named Willie) from 10-0 to 10-1. This marks the *sixth* time Boone has defeated a previously unbeaten opponent. Seriously, this 18-17-3 fighter deserves some kind of special designation. Stingray Emeritus? Diamond Stingray? El Stingraydente For Life? Whatever you want to call him, in the year of the Stingray, it was inevitable that Boone would go beating up on some over-hyped prospect.

Actually, in the year of the Stingray, the Boonemeister probably has at least one or two more in him. ■

Jim Bagg can be reached at Baggmeister@yahoo.com.

"Magic" vs. "Machine" Down Under

It's been said that the boxing ring is sport's ultimate "crucible of truth." Every athletic weakness—physical and psychological—will be vividly revealed, and the one-on-one combat will demand instantaneous and illuminating decisions whose consequences will likely brand him for life. **Arturo Gatti** will forever be lauded for his ferocity under fire, while those who succumb to the pressure will never be able to shake the shame.

The crucible also allows fighters to prove points and resolve public doubts, and such will be the case when Australian **Danny Green**, 31-3 (27), defends his cruiserweight belt against former light heavyweight champion **Antonio Tarver**, 28-6 (19), July 20 at the Sydney Entertainment Centre.

For the 38-year-old titlist, the mission is to prove that all of the "Green Machine's" parts are in working order just six months after a harrowing health scare. Shortly after the turn of the year—just weeks after outpointing previously unbeaten **B.J. Flores**—Green was rushed to a Perth hospital where he underwent emergency surgery on his appendix. During the procedure, a softball-sized abscess that had gone undetected for seven years was also removed from his stomach, and the recovery process was anything but smooth. He lost nearly 29 pounds, and he wondered whether he'd ever recover, much less box again.

"I was genuinely worried that I wasn't ever getting back to full health," Green said during the pre-fight press conference April 6. "I honestly felt I wasn't going to fight again."

But a six-round sparring session against heavyweight Pieter Cronje in late March convinced Green he was fit to fight, and, shortly thereafter, he signed to fight Tarver.

When asked why he chose to fight Tarver instead of attempting to unify the belts, Green replied, "He's a future Hall of Famer. If I can defeat Antonio Tarver, it's a massive feather in my cap."

Conversely, Tarver wants to show that he remains a force at age 42. Tarver's only fight since losing his second decision to **Chad Dawson** in May 2009 saw a 221-pound "Magic Man" decision journeyman **Nagy Aguilera** over 10 rounds, a fight in which he showed only flashes of the skills that conquered **Roy Jones Jr.** (twice), **Glen Johnson**, **Montell Griffin**, **Eric Harding**, and **Reggie Johnson**.

"I'm ready to show the people that I'm not a washed-up, over-the-hill fighter," Tarver said via satellite from Florida during the press conference. "I see young fighters that have more wear and tear than I do. I preserve myself; I take care of myself. If there was a time where I got knocked out and beat up in the ring, it would be time to hang them up."

Activity and geography appear to be on Green's side. He has won 10 fights, eight by knockout, since losing to **Anthony Mundine** in May 2006, and, despite his health issues, he boasts a five fights-to-one advantage since May 2009. Tarver's experience and left-handedness could potentially cause the "Machine" to malfunction, but will age, inactivity, and mountains of travel miles seal his doom?

The crucible will tell all come July 20.

LISTEN UP

The Home Depot Center in Carson, California, the site of the classic third fight between **Israel Vazquez** and **Rafael Marquez**, may experience deja vu July 9 when WBA lightweight beltholder **Brandon "Bam Bam" Rios**, 27-0 (20), makes his first defense against Mexican slugger **Urbano Antillon**. If their last outings are any indication, fans will be in for a treat, for Rios staged a stirring rally to dethrone **Miguel Acosta** via 10th round TKO in February, while Antillon lost a thrilling 12-round war to WBC titlist **Humberto Soto** last December … In an intriguing domestic battle also scheduled for July 9, Manchester's **John Murray** will put his 31-0 (18) record and European lightweight title against Dagenham's **Kevin "The Hammer" Mitchell**, 31-1 (23), whose last fight was a three-round TKO loss to **Michael Katsidis** in May 2010.

FIGHTING FIT? Green was healthy enough to surf in March

PHOTO BY CAMERON SPENCER/GETTY IMAGES

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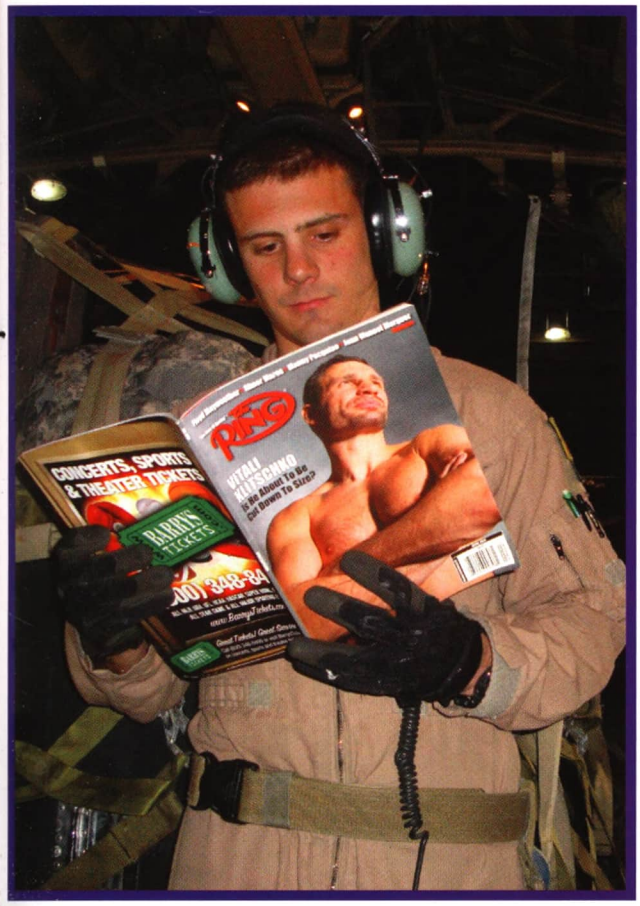

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